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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 26 September 1990, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. de MARCO	(Malta)
later:	Mr. MOUSSA (Vice-President)	(Egypt)
later:	Mr. FLEMMING (Vice-President)	(Saint Lucia)
later:	Mr. de MARCO	(Malta)

- Address by Mr. Ramsewak Shankar, President of the Republic of Suriname
- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Clark (Canada)
Mr. Eyskens (Belgium)
Mr. van den Broek (Netherlands)
Mr. Booh-Booh (Cameroon)
Mr. Frutos Vaesken (Paraguay)
Mr. Bozer (Turkey)
Mr. Poos (Luxembourg)
Mr. Fernandez Ordoñez (Spain)
Mr. Collins (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. RAMSEWAK SHANKAR, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Suriname.

Mr. Ramsewak Shankar, President of the Republic of Suriname, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Suriname, Mr. Ramsewak Shankar, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President SHANKAR: On behalf of the Government and the people of Suriname, I bring you greetings as well as congratulations on your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

Your diplomatic skills and insight into international affairs are well known and, indeed, widely respected. We are therefore pleased to see you in this high office and offer you our full support.

We should also like to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Joseph Narvin Garba, for the skilful and knowledgeable manner in which he carried out the functions of the presidency during the previous session.

Furthermore, I should like to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Javier Perez de Cuellar, who once again put forth his best efforts in the performance of his tasks. He is facing an endless stream of problems, not least of which is the present situation in the Gulf region, and he meets those challenges with diplomatic tact and skill, patience and wisdom.

My delegation would like at this time to avail itself of this opportunity to bid a hearty welcome to the newest Member of our family of nations: the

(President Shankar)

principality of Liechtenstein. We look forward to developing and maintaining fruitful relations with this sister nation.

It is gratifying that in a time of great changes the United Nations is resolutely carrying out its mandate and continuing to demonstrate its usefulness and importance as a legitimate vehicle for the preservation and consolidation of peace and security in the world.

It is the impartiality of the United Nations, its ability to take all legitimate interests into account, that makes it the most focal and appropriate institution for making and keeping peace.

The United Nations system, which was established on the foundation of a legal system of civilized international coexistence, has much too often been involved in achieving peace in the face of the hard reality of the balance of power and of international law and justice.

(President Shankar)

If the 45 years of existence of this Organization has taught us anything, it is that the United Nations is a durable and highly viable organization and that the vision of the founding fathers was far-sighted. Now that the United Nations Charter has been fully recognized as a valid and essential guide, we cherish the hope that it can meet the challenges of the 1990s and beyond.

Two years ago I already had the pleasure of informing the Assembly about the new phase Suriname had entered into as a consequence of the genuine desire of the Surinamese people for democracy. But then it was already clear that the transformation of the political and social order would not be an easy task. In fact, diverging interests in society have been impeding the realization of the objectives set by the Government for this phase of the democratization process, in which prime consideration is given to the strengthening of a common awareness, a general societal participation and a national consensus in the interest of a sustained national development.

My Government was pleased to find that in the community a number of initiatives were being taken aimed at promoting the essential national harmony, so we responded by initiating national dialogue as a constructive consensus mechanism. This mechanism, which embodies the mobilization of all social groups, should offer possibilities to work out strategies and to discuss the implementation of programmes aimed at the realization of our national development.

We do realize that this national development should take place within a specific institutional political and legal framework which is applicable to the entire territory and which promotes national stability, peace and security. It is obvious that without sustained national economic and social development all our efforts to reinstate and promote a constitutional democracy will be in vain. Therefore, we are convinced that our endeavours should be directed towards forging

(President Shankar)

the national consensus I mentioned earlier, and towards overcoming the present economic impediments.

With its vast maritime area and hinterland and its abundant natural resources, Suriname has the physical basis to provide its population with an adequate living standard. However, the present social and economic conditions in the country have a negative impact on the full utilization of its natural potentials. Of course, we are convinced that no responsible Government can, for whatever reason, simply brush aside sound expert advice with regard to the internal causes of declining productivity and increasing inflation. Indeed, my Government has seriously embarked on the national preparation of a carefully considered programme, inspired by the need both for adjustment and for stability.

We draw justification for our caution from a review of the results of adjustments which have been introduced in some countries and have had serious effects on the stabiilty of democratic processes. Therefore, when external economic and political pressure is exerted in defiance of solemn commitments sealed in a treaty and in disregard of the historically determined complexity of our society, we do perceive not only a deviation from formal lofty principles, but also an unwarranted attempt to interfere in the decision-making process in our society.

I am well aware that my country's problems, which I have just briefly touched upon, are not unique and apply to other countries as well. This is just one illustration of the adverse tendency in international economic relations, which is characterized by an ever-increasing gap between the industrialized North and the developing countries that are faced with increased dependency on foreign development-financing and the steadily growing impoverishment of their populations.

(President Shankar)

Many of these developing countries have ceased to grow in per capita terms, and phenomena such as poverty, misery, malnutrition and even hunger are becoming more and more a common concern of many of these countries. In most developing countries, immense human deprivation persists: 1 billion people live in absolute poverty and 900 million receive no education, while 14 million children die every year before the age of five.

During the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, last April, representatives of various countries from the North and the South expressed their increasing disappointment with the results of the development strategy planned for the 1980s. The expression "lost decade" strikingly illustrates the enormous disillusion with regard to the economic position of the developing countries, despite the immense technological changes and dynamic growth that characterized the development of the rich countries.

There is a growing awareness that our world is one of interdependent relationships, and that developments in one part of the world unavoidably affect other parts. Against this background it is not acceptable that islands of profusion and wealth exist in the midst of an ocean of scarcity and poverty. To reduce this gap between the rich and the poor countries it is desirable that urgent and effective measures be taken, such as the transfer of technology, the solution of the external-debt problem, access to the world trade market and adequate external financing. In this respect, my delegation hopes that the adoption of the new programme of action by the second Paris Conference on Least Developed Countries will indeed contribute to redressing the deterioration in the majority of developing countries.

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(President Shankar)

More than ever before the central role of the human factor in the development process has to be recognized. Health, nutrition, housing, population policies and other social services are a key to improving both individual welfare and successful development. Education and training, which must be available to all, are essential for improving the quality of human resources and for sustaining economic growth.

The present international situation has, after the fundamental global changes that took place at the end of the decade, entered a new era. Some of the key assumptions, as well as structures and attitudes based on policies and concepts of the cold-war era, have become obsolete and are no longer adequate to serve the needs and imperatives of today. The end of the cold war and the end of the East-West confrontation now allow for cost savings through disarmament, which, in turn, can translate into more resources for development programmes in the developing countries.

(President Shankar)

Along with the positive changes that have occurred in many parts of the world, the current turmoil and explosive situation in the Gulf region demonstrates, however, that relaxation of tension between the two main Powers has not embraced all areas of international relations nor has it led to a solution of one of the key international issues.

The developments in the Gulf region have not only altered the balance of power in that region, but have also altered the balance of supply and demand in the world oil market. These events have already had a tremendous effect on the economies of many developing countries, especially the non-oil-producing ones.

The Government of Suriname condemns the invasion of Kuwait and supports Security Council resolutions 660 (1990) and 661 (1990). We underline the principles of good-neighbourliness, respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all States and the inadmissibility of any attempt to change a country's system of government by force.

The present crisis once again brings into focus the vulnerability of small States, in terms both of their security and of their sovereignty, and the need for special regional and international mechanisms addressing potentially dangerous threats to the security and sovereignty of small States. For this reason we urge the Secretary-General to explore ways and means for the facilities to be put in place within the framework of the United Nations Charter.

The present crisis also highlights the urgent need for more intensive efforts to be made for the resolution of other crises such as the question of Palestine. In our view, a just and lasting settlement of the Middle East problem is not possible without fully taking into account the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Having said this, we feel that a comprehensive, lasting and peaceful solution to the Middle East problem should be pursued within the framework of an international

(President Shankar)

peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all relevant parties.

Improved East-West relations have provided a positive momentum across the full range of arms control and disarmament issues. Although some hopeful bilateral agreements such as the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - have been reached and progress has been made in the fields of disarmament and confidence-building measures, the explosive situation in the Gulf area demonstrates the sombre reality of the arms build-up. Human beings are not infallible, so in a strenuous situation even a well-intended decision can result in a miscalculation and lead to a serious threat to mankind, world peace and security; certainly in a situation like the one in the Gulf region, where it has already been proved that some countries do have chemical and nuclear weapons.

Many Member States have time and time again called - without significant results however - upon the international community to negotiate a binding commitment to general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Complete disarmament should include nuclear arms, chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The Gulf crisis must have taught us at least one lesson: that the proliferation of chemical and nuclear weapons must be definitely and effectively stopped. My delegation is therefore pleased to note that a large part of the work of the Conference on Disarmament at its 1990 session was devoted to the ongoing elaboration of a multilateral convention on the stockpiling of chemical weapons.

Forces of change have indeed had many effects and provided a powerful impetus to the struggle against domination such as the movement against apartheid in South Africa. Force, for a long period, has been the main weapon used to suppress the will of the majority of the South African people. There were more than enough

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weapons at the disposal of the apartheid régime and they did not lack readiness to use them against the oppressed people of South Africa. It is encouraging to note that the authorities in Pretoria have at long last accepted the inevitability of the demise of apartheid and conceded that negotiation is the only way to avoid a dangerous future. Nelson Mandela's triumphant release from prison was dramatic evidence of a changing South Africa.

My Government welcomes the joint declaration of the Government of South Africa and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) of 6 August 1990 and the adoption by consensus of resolution 44/244 on 17 September 1990. We look forward to the time when the phenomenon of apartheid will truly be extinct and a united, non-racial South Africa, based on the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa has joined the Organization.

The winds of change in international understanding have also touched on Cambodia. After many years of conflict and suffering in that country the recent agreement, reached in Jakarta, to form a national council based on the United Nations peace proposal, is a sign that the parties are moving towards a more concrete and hopeful state, clearing the way for a comprehensive and durable solution. We whole-heartedly welcome this agreement and urge the world community to encourage these developments which will offer the Cambodian people new perspectives for peace, stability and security.

The prevailing level of international understanding is also having its beneficial impact on the problem of the Korean peninsula. The praiseworthy initiative of the leaders of the two States in arriving at a negotiated settlement deserves the support and encouragement of the world community. The Government of Suriname supports the aspirations of the South Korean Government to become a Member of the Organization, as it is not unfavourably disposed towards separate

(President Shankar)

membership of the two States involved in anticipation of the unification of the Korean people.

The developments in Central America have now reached a stage which nurtures hope for a durable peace in the region but it is necessary to secure stability through progress in economic and social development.

Suriname follows with great interest the preparations for the forthcoming elections in the Republic of Haiti. We cherish the hope that the electoral process will take place in a peaceful way, offering the Haitian people new hope to decide their own destiny.

The nature and scope of global environmental problems are now widely known. Suriname is ready to contribute to a solution of these problems by preserving a substantial part of its rain forest. To this end, however, we have to overcome some obstacles.

(President Shankar)

Our existing institutional framework regarding environmental policy has to be strengthened and supplemented while supplementary laws and regulations on the environment need to be enacted.

At the regional level, Suriname has actively played its part in this regard within the context of the Treaty of Amazonian Co-operation.

We do hope that, during the upcoming discussions at regional and international levels, agreement will be reached with respect to solutions of problems related to the destruction of the environment.

During the seventeenth special session, held in February this year, the General Assembly adopted by consensus a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action regarding the problem of illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse. During that session, practically all States and different organizations paid great attention to this problem and its negative effects.

My Government has already taken measures at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels to prevent, curb and eradicate the illegal production, consumption and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. We realize, though, that much remains to be done.

I am taking this opportunity to pay a tribute to the United Nations for its constructive work in this field.

The diplomatic activity pursued by the international community over many years through the United Nations has at last begun to bear fruit. This, among other matters, is mainly due to an international climate in which tensions have been eased by markedly improved relations between the two major Powers.

The international community is rediscovering the usefulness and indispensability of multilateralism. It has been given new opportunities actively to perform its task of maintenance of international peace and security. The United

(President Shankar)

Nations and its principal organs are beginning to live up to the high expectations of the world community.

However, this somewhat idyllic portrayal of the changes in international political relations must not lead us to overlook the sources of international conflict that keep darkening the sky, such as world poverty, the debt problem, environmental destruction, the rampant drug problem and the injustices that mark international economic relations. These sources, plus the recent conflict that has arisen in the Gulf region which threatens world peace, have proved clearly that expected benefits of an improved political climate are neither automatic nor balanced.

World history has shown time and again that the propensity of certain States to take unilateral action in order to further their national interests has been the greatest threat to international security because it has led to tensions, conflict and the use of military force.

The current complex and contradictory international situation makes it necessary that the peace-keeping potential of multilateralism be exploited to the fullest for the benefit of all mankind.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Suriname for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Ramsewak Shankar, President of the Republic of Suriname, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the first speaker in the general debate this afternoon, I would like to draw the attention of representatives to the fact that, in accordance with the decision taken by the Assembly at its 3rd plenary meeting, on 21 September 1990, the list of speakers for the general debate will close at 6 o'clock this afternoon. I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inscribe their names as soon as possible.

Mr. CLARK (Canada): I would like to offer you my congratulations and profound best wishes, Sir, as you assume your important duties as President of the General Assembly at this session. The wisdom and the understanding you bring to this position are particularly appropriate for these historic times. I am confident that you will do great honour to the legacy left by your predecessor.

A few days hence the leaders of over 80 countries will gather here to discuss the pressing plight of tens of millions of innocent children around the world - the horrors of hunger and disease, the debilitating consequences of illiteracy, the abomination of abuse. The Prime Minister of Canada has the honour to co-chair that World Summit for Children, which will focus our attention as never before on what this Organization must still do: construct a world order that allows all nations, all peoples, all colours and creeds to live on a planet that is prosperous, peaceful, free and just.

There is an old Haida Indian saying from Western Canada:

> "We do not inherit this land from our parents; we simply borrow it from our children."

That idea motivates the Children Summit, as it must this Organization.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

We live in uncommon times. Never before has the opportunity for this body to exercise its intended mission been greater, and never before have the risks and challenges been so daunting.

This past year has seen the tearing down of old barriers, the disintegration of walls - walls of the mind and real walls - walls we once thought permanent.

We in the West, perhaps to an extreme, used to view the world through the prism of the cold war. That prism determined many of our priorities and guided our actions. That prism was a prison, and it has now been shattered. The consequence has been liberation. Liberation for millions of people in Central and Eastern Europe who now experience democracy where they only recently dreamt of it. Liberation for the minds of men and women who can now turn to old problems long neglected and new problems now before us. Liberation for the world, which is now being freed from the tensions of a European balance of terror that penetrated to the farthest corner of the globe. And liberation for this Organization, where the words of the United Nations Charter can cease to be distant goals and may now become descriptions of our common action.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

(spoke in French)

This past year has seen progress in many regions and on many issues.

Namibia, the last colony in Africa, is now its newest democracy. We take great pride in the role the United Nations played in assisting Namibia to make its transition to independence - a role that was made possible by the international effort involving 109 Members of the Organization.

In South Africa Nelson Mandela is now free, and he and President De Klerk are on the verge of beginning a process of negotiation with a view to building a non-racial, democratic South Africa. We applaud this progress and impatiently await the day when we shall see clear and irreversible changes in the apartheid régime. We call upon all South Africans to show the necessary good will to bring an end to the violence which is casting a shadow over the negotiation process.

In Cambodia the parties to that long, bloody conflict may be on the path to a peaceful settlement. All Canadians welcome the unanimity displayed by the Security Council when it approved last week a framework for a comprehensive political solution to this conflict. We hope that this will soon set Cambodia on the road to a just, peaceful and lasting settlement. Canada unequivocally supports that effort and we have already pledged $1.5 million to help the United Nations give effect to its plans.

Elsewhere in Asia the Government of South Korea has in our view taken a welcome initiative in beginning talks with its northern neighbour. We hope that Korea will soon become a full and active Member of the Organization.

In Latin America the unique experience and expertise of the United Nations in peace-keeping has been invaluable. The cease-fire in Nicaragua, the successful conclusion of the democratic process there, and progress in the talks in El Salvador and Guatemala may finally bring hope to a region torn too long by conflict and ideology.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

In the Persian Gulf the United Nations is playing the role it has not been able to play for decades. Thanks to the Organization, the international community has been able to bring its authority to bear on a country which has grossly and clearly contravened the United Nations Charter's prohibition on policies of aggression and has thereby endangered the serious efforts of all the Members of the United Nations to settle disputes peacefully.

The Security Council's ability to act in concert is without any doubt testimony to the new era of co-operation now opening to us. But it is also a warning to Iraq that the United Nations will not relent until Iraq has withdrawn its forces from Kuwait and restored independence to that small country.

We obviously need more than resolutions. All the Members of the United Nations - each in its own way - should ensure the effectiveness of the measures adopted so far and should use whatever diplomatic resources are available to them to persuade Iraq to withdraw its troops.

(continued in English)

Iraq's aggression is a litmus test for what the United Nations can now become. It we succeed here the United Nations will send a clear and unambiguous signal to others that the world is now different, that it will not tolerate aggression and that international law is to be served and not ignored.

Now is not a time for complacency. That we are succeeding in some parts of the world means we have yet to succeed in others. That we have solved some problems means there are many still to solve.

In Lebanon a grave situation continues, and, while we take heart from constitutional progress made in the past year, all members of the international community - collectively and individually - must make efforts to restore Lebanon's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

In the Middle East, although the world is focused on the Gulf, the continuing Arab-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli disputes are unresolved and threatening. A just and lasting negotiated solution based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, including their right to self-determination, is more vital now than ever before.

In the Western Sahara some progress has been made through the great efforts of the Secretary-General to encourage dialogue directed to peace. The real difficulties persist and a settlement has yet to be reached.

And in the Horn of Africa the cycle of conflict, poverty and starvation continues. While we can take pride in the way the United Nations and its agencies provided food to those in need, only a lasting political solution will end the terrible curse of famine in that region.

Around the world the challenge is all too clear: unequal levels of development which perpetuate poverty and spawn conflict; a world population which will expand by 3.5 billion people over the next three and a half decades; 14 million children dying each year from illness and hunger; a generation debilitated by drugs; the proliferation of weapons - chemical, nuclear and conventional; and an ailing environment, whose air is being poisoned, whose oceans and lakes are becoming cesspools, and whose forests are being destroyed as if they were disposable. This is not the picture of a planet of promise: it is the picture of a planet in pain.

My own country, Canada, is a place blessed by Providence. We are prosperous. We are free. We are at peace. But we too have had to confront the need for new attitudes and new approaches to our own problems, including the situation of our aboriginal people.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

Although we failed this year in finding a new constitutional accommodation for our country, I can promise the Assembly that Canada will succeed in renewing our Confederation. We shall do so with that same flexibility, imagination, tolerance and compromise which have made Canada, a nation of so many cultures, into what Barbara Ward once called "the first international country".

I have raised those values because they are precisely the ones that speak of the needs of this Organization and this world. In this new era compromise must cease to be seen as second best; it must become the instrument of our common cause.

In the years between the two world wars and in the depths of the cold war, there were debates about whether a State's interests were best pursued through unilateral action or through co-operation and compromise. That debate is now over. It is over not because one side won but because the world has changed. The choice today is not between realism and idealism, unilateralism or co-operation; it is between success and failure. Co-operation is now the new realism and pragmatism is the only path to progress. We either work together and succeed or we work separately and fail. We need new action. But we also need new attitudes - ideas that animate, ideas that indicate what is no longer feasible and what is now necessary.

I believe our first challenge is to redefine the concept of security. Security has ceased to be something to be achieved unilaterally. Security has ceased to be something to be attained through military means alone. Security has become multidimensional and it has become co-operative. In a world where poverty and underdevelopment plague most of the planet, the developed world cannot pretend to be secure simply because it alone is prosperous. In an era of nuclear and chemical weapons, of ballistic missiles, of terrorism, of interdependent markets and economies, of diseases, the development of prosperity throughout the world is not a question of charity but a question of security. That mandates continued

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

emphasis on official development assistance, on more open and freer markets, on innovative debt strategies. Those are not only economic or humanitarian actions; they have become security imperatives.

In a world where the frontiers of States may be secure but the air, land and water are being poisoned, environmental action is also a fundamental security question. And in a period of burgeoning population and rapid industrialization, where winds and waters know no borders, environmental security will be only achieved through co-operation.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

That mandates an approach to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development that is aggressive and innovative. It requires a realistic dialogue between the developing and the developed world about environmental damage that threatens all States, rich and poor. As part of that effort, Canada will vigourously pursue the possibility of a world forestry convention by 1992.

A new concept of security also requires that we address more effectively the political and military tensions that persist in so many regions of the world. While there is much to be done globally, I believe that a new focus on regional approaches to security is more necessary and more promising than ever. It is more necessary both because of the consequences of conflict arising from interdependence and because of the destructive nature of modern weapons. And it is more promising because the absence of East-West tensions now frees countries and regions to pursue solutions to local problems on local terms.

Security is more than the absence of war; it is the presence of peace. That requires a shared sense on each side that the survival of the other is in its own best interest. That means building trust and confidence. Canada believes that a regional approach to confidence building has much to offer. That approach can involve a variety of measures: dialogue itself designed to exchange perspectives and increase understanding; greater transparency in terms of military capacity; agreements to inform other members in the region of activities they might consider threatening in the absence of warning; and eventually, institutions and processes of conflict resolution and crisis prevention.

Confidence building is not a blueprint or a grand solution. It does not prejudge outcomes or impose solutions. It is not rigid. It is in fact what the Organization has always done best. It is step-by-step. It is functional. It is flexible.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

The success of such an approach in Europe is undeniable. Obviously, specific measures taken in Europe may not apply to other regions. Those regions will require approaches tailored to their nature and requirements. But the fundamental principles of confidence building apply.

It is for that reason that, in addition to proposing new initiatives for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Canada has suggested that the countries of the North-Pacific region could benefit from similar approaches to confidence building. Those might include advance notification of military manoeuvres, an Open Skies régime, and military data exchanges. Other regions of the world - the Middle East, Latin America - might also benefit from a regional approach to confidence building.

One of the key elements of confidence building is verification. Verification provides proof, and proof triggers trust. That is why Canada co-sponsored the resolution adopted by the General Assembly calling for an experts' study on verification to be conducted by the Secretary-General - resolution 43/81 B. A Canadian chaired that study and we will take the lead at this session of the Assembly in proposing a resolution that will call on the United Nations to promote increased dialogue between diplomats and experts on verification issues; to establish a United Nations data bank of verification research material; and to support and expand where appropriate the powers of the Secretary-General to engage in fact-finding missions as they relate to the possible violation of existing arms-control agreements.

There is one persistent security problem above all others that the international community has failed to address satisfactorily. That is the problem of proliferation: proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and proliferation of their means of delivery, as well as conventional weapons, which have become so destructive.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

We all recognize that arms do not cause conflicts. But we must also recognize that arms can make conflict more likely and that they make that conflict more destructive when it occurs. The progress between the super-Powers on the reduction of their stockpiles of nuclear weapons is welcome, as is the progress made to date in ensuring a successful conclusion to the conventional-force-reduction talks currently under way in Vienna. Those negotiations can and must succeed. But to reduce capabilities and enhance confidence in one region and with some weapons is only part of the challenge. There is much more to be done.

In the area of nuclear proliferation, the just-concluded Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, despite consensus on almost all issues, was unable to agree on a concluding document. That failure should alert us all to the dangerous prospect of the unravelling of that vital international Treaty. Canada believes that movement is needed on all sides. We welcome the joint American and Soviet commitment to a step-by-step approach to further restrictions on nuclear testing. We believe that commitment should be followed up immediately, with the final goal being a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing.

At the same time, we have been deeply disturbed by a tendency among some others to adopt positions that can only act to undermine the vital consensus which underlies the existing treaties on non-proliferation and nuclear testing. Clearly, compromise and forward movement are required on the part of everyone. But the pursuit of other objectives should not be allowed to threaten those existing agreements that have become so vital. It is Canada's firm view that both the non-proliferation Treaty and a comprehensive test-ban treaty are too important for international peace and security to be held hostage one to the other.

Regional nuclear arms and the threat of chemical proliferation and use have been raised starkly again by the situation in the Persian Gulf. We must move quickly to a comprehensive and global ban on chemical weapons. We urge all parties

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

at the Conference on Disarmament to ensure that the opportunity for a successful agreement is not lost and that agreement is reached soon. During this session of the Assembly, Canada, along with Poland, will seek to strengthen the commitment of all Members to that end.

In addition, there is the very important issue of arms transfers and the arms trade. It is critical that peace in Europe not be purchased at the price of a more innovative arms bazaar elsewhere. That arms bazaar has stunted development by hijacking scarce resources. It has distorted whole economies. It has increased bloodshed. It is important in that context that all parties to the conventional-force-reduction talks in Europe take steps to ensure that weapons affected by that agreement not end up as contributions to potential conflicts elsewhere in the world.

The continued proliferation of ballistic-missile technology is particularly worrisome. Ballistic missiles raise the prospect of the delivery of weapons of mass destruction into the heart of enemy territory. That possibility not only means great potential suffering; it also induces regional arms races. That is why Canada has so strongly supported the recent expansion of the membership of the Missile Technology Control Régime. The Assembly should focus on that issue and call for all Members to take measures to control the export of that technology. Canada will play a leading role in such an effort.

Canada also believes that is is important to make arms transfers and procurement as transparent as is prudent and practical. Transparency builds confidence and is a recognition of the obligation we all have to the common interest. That is why Canada has strongly supported the work of the United Nations Group of Government Experts on Arms Transfer Transparency and why we look forward to studying its report in detail. That is why we support the widest possible voluntary reporting to the United Nations of military expenditures, procurement and

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

arms transfers. I am pleased to announce that, this year for the first time, Canada will be releasing an annual report on its exports of military goods.

There is, with arms, a demand side and a supply side. Measures can be taken to restrict supplies to stabilizing and prudent levels. But demand must also be addressed, and that is why a regional approach to confidence building is relevant to the issue too.

Finally, Canada believes that much more can be done to ensure that the United Nations unique capacity to provide peace-keeping forces for regional conflicts remains effective and efficient. I am pleased that Canada was able to help breathe new life into the Special Committee on Peace-Keeping Operations, which has now provided the United Nations with new proposals to improve present peace-keeping activities and to plan for new ventures. However, more work and even greater commitment will be needed to ensure that the United Nations is provided with the capacity and the resources to mount varied, speedy and successful peace-keeping operations, be they in Cambodia, Central America, the Western Sahara or the Persian Gulf.

In particular, Canada would support a United Nations effort to secure a clear indication from all Member States of the forces and equipment they could make available in future United Nations peace-keeping operations. We believe that effort could include an inventory of civilian resources. That might include police forces, communications and logistics personnel and elections experts and observers, who could be utilized not only to keep the peace but to prepare for peace. If there is one thing that recent events make clear, it is that democracy and freedom are fundamental factors in building a co-operative security structure for our new era. In Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia and parts of Africa, there is a new recognition that democracy is necessary because democracy works. That is not the victory of one ideology over another. It is the victory of common sense.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

Democracy allows Governments to gauge and reflect the needs of their societies. Democracy allows individuals to express their views and exercise their abilities. Democracy and development go hand in hand, since it is the open market which feeds prosperity and leads, almost always, to democracy.

Democracy limits the conflict which inevitably results from repression. Democracy is flexible, and because it is flexible it does not snap. Democracy, at bottom, is the politics of pragmatism and the politics of security.

It is our belief in the role of democracy in building security that has led Canada to propose a democratic development unit for the Organization of American States. That proposal has been accepted. It is that same belief that has led Canada to put forward human rights proposals in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe which will strengthen the rule of law and the rights of minorities throughout Europe. It is the same belief that has led Canada to contribute, bilaterally and through the Commonwealth, to democratic dialogue and preparations for constitutional talks in South Africa.

That is also why Canada applauds the July decision of the Organization of African Unity to endorse a new charter dealing with democracy and development and why we supported financially the conference which produced it. And that is why we provided election assistance this year to Haiti, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Namibia and Nicaragua.

Canada believes that there is a further role for this Organization in encouraging democratic development. Through supporting the co-operation of the various regional organizations in exchanging information and improving co-ordination, and through encouraging Member States in their many recent efforts to strengthen democracy, the General Assembly can act as a catalyst in reinforcing both democracy and security.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

As we move forward, I believe there are several guidelines we can usefully adopt as we seek together to build a structure of co-operative security.

Guideline 1 is that co-operative security is multidimensional. It is based on the recognition that there are many significant threats to our livelihood, our health, our development and our very existence.

Guideline 2 is that co-operative security accepts that links exist between threats. It recognizes that few threats can be managed satisfactorily without also addressing others, that peace requires prosperity, that stability requires justice within and between States, that democracy, development and disarmament are all related.

Guideline 3 is that co-operative security is functional. It seeks to avoid blueprints and grand schemes and focuses on institutions and approaches which work, which produce results.

Guideline 4 is that co-operative security requires dialogue and compromise. It accepts the fundamental truth that conversation is almost always better than conflict and that conversation leading to compromise is the best way to solve problems.

Guideline 5 is that co-operative security builds on the link between stability and change. It demands that we accept that order and predictability are not an alternative to change, but rather its foundation, and that order in turn requires growth and flexibility if it is to endure.

Guideline 6 is that co-operative security rejects blocs. Blocs perpetuate distrust. They build a tension between regions and groups which is no better than tension between States. They perpetuate a "them versus us" psychology which may satisfy sentiment but which does little to solve problems.

(Mr. Clark, Canada)

Guideline 7 is that co-operative security rejects stale rhetoric and sterile ideology. It sees no advantage in stereotypes and sees much damage in the prejudice perpetuated by them. It rejects - as Canada, for example, does - such blemishes on this Organization as the odious resolution equating Zionism with racism adoptd 15 years ago by the Assembly.

Guideline 8 is that co-operative security recognizes that true security is impossible without justice. It accepts that democracy within States is a force for stability and prosperity and that justice between States, whether through development assistance, debt relief or fairer and more open terms of trade, is a necessary component of a secure world.

Today in Ottawa on our Parliament Hill a statue was unveiled to Lester B. Pearson, a great Canadian leader and world statesman, a true friend of this Organization. Mr. Pearson was present at the creation of the United Nations. He helped build its Charter. He helped mould its mission. He played a central role in establishing the Organization's great tradition of peace-keeping. There was no cause to which he was more committed than the construction of an effective United Nations system. Out of the ashes of the Second World War and the First World War before it he sought to build a structure of co-operative security which would prevent Armageddon and build a world which was prosperous, free and just for all. Lester Pearson never saw the United Nations fulfil its intended purpose. His dream was dashed by yet another war, the cold war.

That war is now over. The promise is renewed, and the dream rekindled. Yet the challenges remain more acute, more demanding than ever before. Let us do now what we have been unable to do before. Let us shake off our past failings, confront our present and in so doing build a new future. Let us behave as United Nations.

Mr. EYSKENS (Belgium) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, I congratulate you warmly on your election to your high office. I am convinced that your great experience and wisdom will be reflected in your term as President, and I assure you of my delegation's full support. I wish also to convey our gratitude to your predecessor, Mr. Joseph Garba. I pay a tribute as well to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, for the way in which he embodies the work and spirit of the Organization.

In my statement last year I alluded to the famous remark made by my eminent predecessor Paul-Henri Spaak more than 40 years ago before a General Assembly sharply divided by the cold war and paralysed by the East-West conflict: "We are frightened".

Today even more than last year we can and must speak out and say that we are frightened no more. On the contrary, after so many years of tension, suspicion and latent or indirect conflict between East and West, we are today filled with great hope and renewed confidence.

Détente between West and East is becoming understanding, and confrontation is becoming co-operation, all at an astounding pace. To mention but one forum, at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) we are formulating a structure of peace and security reaching from San Francisco to Vladivostok, and embracing Europe with all its countries and capitals which bear the wounds and scars of the innumerable wars that have broken out in the Old World over the millennia.*

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*Mr. Moussa (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

It would be pointless and provocative today to try to assess the cold war in terms of winners and losers. It is history that has triumphed, and history has certainly not come to an end. The hopes and dreams of tens of millions of men and women vanquished the totalitarian forces of a utopian ideology incompatible with an ethically and socially balanced conception of humanity. For everybody is somebody, and it was on the basis of that simple truth deeply rooted in the soul of individuals and peoples that the great movement of liberalization and freedom was built up in recent months.

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

We ought to pay a tribute to the leaders, politicians, people with a social conscience, academics, people in the arts and those involved with religion who, at their own risk, chose to break with totalitarianism, bureaucracy, inefficiency, stagnation, stereotyped language, manipulation of truth and history rewritten. In the context of East-West understanding, we acclaim with the most immense satisfaction the result on 3 October of the negotiations leading to German unification. This is a milestone in the construction of a new Europe which will contribute to stability of the European continent.

Europeans themselves, primarily, must design and put together the elements in the new architecture which will form the framework for pan-European relations; however, for obvious, political reasons, establishing a peaceful order in Europe and putting it into practice can be possible only through wide-ranging co-operation with the United States and the Soviet Union and through co-operation between those two Powers. The transatlantic relationship should none the less not give way to a trans-Ural one; that would be a nonsense now that East-West rivalry is a dead letter. On the contrary, the Atlantic Alliance can and must, in our opinion, be transformed into an instrument for security and co-operation with our fellow Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) countries.

Obviously, implementing and monitoring mutual disarmament are of absolute priority, not only as they are instances of the most essential, confidence and security-building measures, but also because the construction of a European architecture and order of peace is conditional upon a sufficient degree of disarmament. We hope, therefore, that the Vienna disarmament talks will quickly yield a satisfactory outcome, and that the 23 participating States will be able to sign a final agreement at the forthcoming CSCE Conference on 19 November.

The CSCE must also be the basis for a second round of negotiations, a CSCE-II, which should lead to quantitative and, particularly, qualitative reductions in

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

arsenals, in order finally to make armed aggression impossible. This is vital for Europe. A mutual, controlled and irreversible disarmament exercise of this kind must become the basis for a European security community in which the defence of the countries taking part will indeed mean "defence" in the strictest sense of the term. Disarmament of this kind must, however, retain the capacity to deter, as our planet is hardly safe while irresponsible leaders shamelessly resort to blackmail and military occupation, as we have very recently seen happen.

As a European country and a founder member of the European Community, my country deems it of the highest importance that the Community should play the role which falls to it within the CSCE in a consistent manner, speaking with a single voice, building peace, advocating economic, social and cultural co-operation, and serving as an example of political unification.

Organizing a new and greater Europe based on co-operation must take the principle of complementarity as its premise. This means that, wherever possible, existing institutions should be used to the full, and that we should avoid setting up new institutions whose usefulness cannot be demonstrated in advance. Belgium therefore much prefers to set up co-operation mechanisms rather than create a new wave of institutions. For example, in the field of human rights, the Council of Europe, with 21 members at present, should be able to play an important role by welcoming in new members in a spirit of openness, while still maintaining the standards and values it has set in the past.

The great attraction of the Council of Europe is, in our opinion, that it has a legal tribunal which keeps a watch on whether the mandatory provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights are being observed. It would be wrong to think that human rights are best protected by each State, acting in a sovereign manner and remote from any external interference. The development of international law shows very clearly that there is a need to give the international community a

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supervisory brief. We think that, on a world scale, the United Nations has an essential task to carry out in this field. In purely political matters, the Security Council is capable of acting promptly, as we have seen in these past weeks and even yesterday. But where human rights are concerned, the procedure is, unfortunately, slow, and conclusions are most often reached only when an irreversible situation has already occurred in the offending country. Belgium would therefore like to see a study carried out of how United Nations procedures in the human rights field could be speeded up, and would very much like this matter to be put to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

In the field of economic and scientific co-operation - the central element of the so-called second basket of the Helsinki Final Act - I would like to draw your attention to the activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); that organization should be renewed from the inside and open itself to co-operation with other countries wishing to adopt economic policies based on free market principles, that is, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including even the Soviet Union. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe could also, in future, play a role of prime importance here.

In respect of the first basket of the Helsinki Final Act - which covers disarmament and security - we believe that procedures should be set up involving regular consultations and information exchanges between the Foreign Ministers of the 35 member States - soon to be only 34 - and that the Heads of State or Government should also meet at regular intervals to establish what the content of the co-operation between their States should be. This should go together with the establishment of a small general secretariat and, perhaps, the involvement of CSCE diplomatic representatives.

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

We are in favour of setting up a system to prevent conflicts, based on exchanges of information, on consultations and on mediation and arbitration. Together with the Netherlands and Luxembourg, Belgium has developed a specific proposal to this end.

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

However, I feel that we must go much further. The Helsinki Final Act of 1975 has been of crucial importance in generating the wave of liberalization in the socialist countries. But we must bear in mind that the Final Act is still a political document without any binding legal force. We therefore think that to complete the process initiated by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) a charter for security and co-operation in Europe, enforceable under international law, is needed. We might envisage giving the International Court of Justice at The Hague an important role to play in that process. We could also consider the creation of a specific legal forum. The core issue is that signatory States should accept the jurisdiction of such a forum and abide by its decisions.

Belgium is also greatly concerned about the problems arising out of ethnic diversity within State borders and the presence of ethnic minorities. Corrections of State borders do not seem to us the best solution. Demands put forward in that sense tend to aggravate conflicts even further. The history of Europe prior to the First World War and in the inter-war period should inspire us to consider timely measures to avoid any form of neo-Balkanization. We believe that the proper handling of such questions is possible only given respect for human rights, and thus through the application of the "third basket" of the Helsinki Final Act. However, adequate institutional solutions must also be found. Speaking from our own experience, we in Belgium are of the view that the granting of extensive cultural autonomy in various matters relating to private and community questions of a personal nature - including language, religious freedom and the organization of education - can prepare the ground for a peaceful solution. Such a solution is advisable because it is compatible with the survival of States, provided political leaders demonstrate suitable mutual restraint.

Finally, the credibility of a security charter for Europe would be enhanced if - again in the longer run - we were to consider the establishment of a

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multilateral security corps for Europe made up of contingents from the smaller European States. The political and psychological impact of such a European peace-keeping force on the Europe of the future could be profound and constitute a model for other continents. Let me add at once that, obviously, pan-European security remains to a large extent dependent on the quality of co-operation and understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union in security matters. For that reason we favour the speedy signature of a declaration of non-aggression by as great a number of States as possible.

However paradoxical it may sound, tomorrow's Europe is more easily defined in terms of values than in terms of geographical boundaries. In my view the Europe of values encompasses all countries within and outside the old continent that in their constitutional and legal practices subscribe to and observe respect for the human individual, pluralistic democracy, fundamental political and human rights, the efficiency of the market economy, the organization of social-security systems, and so on.

One remark often made by sceptics is that all we learn from history is that it teaches us nothing. There is, however, one important lesson of recent history that becomes ever clearer: an ever-growing number of countries have almost empirically concluded that economic progress and social advance are necessarily linked with pluralistic democracy and the market economy. All in all, with the bankruptcy of centrally planned economies now such a dramatically illustrated fact, the market economy based on competition and complementarity stands out as the most workable economic system.

If for the sake of efficiency the principle of economic competition is accepted, the same must hold true with regard to internal political life. Freedom to establish enterprises and trade unions must go hand in hand with the freedom to

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establish political parties that will present to voters blueprints for society in a context of political competition.

In pronouncing ourselves in favour of the market economy we do not mean just any form of it. Forms of market economy that deteriorate into economic empire-building, monopolies and oligopolies can be just as inefficient and Malthusian as State-run and bureaucratic economies. When compared, State capitalism and private monopoly capitalism show common negative features with regard to the degree of social well-being they generate. We do favour a sufficiently competitive market economy. Governments must, however, play an essential role in safeguarding fair play and guaranteeing equal opportunities for businessmen, as well as in eliminating abuses of power. An efficient market is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for social protection, social security and social justice.

We are therefore strongly in favour of a market economy with a socially corrected course - in short, a social market economy, as it has been called in Western countries since the post-war economic miracle worked in the Federal Republic of Germany by the then Minister of Economic Affairs, Ludwig Erhard.

Standing before this Assembly as a representative of a country of the North, I wonder how the majority of you, my friends and colleagues, representatives of the South, of great cultures of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Arab world, view and evaluate the growing understanding between the countries of the North and how, perhaps, it might inspire you with a measure of fear.

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

Are not we, the people of the North, in the process of solving our problems and settling our affairs at the expense of our solidarity with the developing world and other continents? Are we not too arrogant, forever tempted to consider our model of society and our values as export products suitable for all? I raise the question. Are we not shamelessly self-righteous when we keep on bringing up human rights issues when, in the relatively recent past, Europe itself has illustrated the most hideous violations of those rights?

At a time when we of the North are constantly speaking of peace, I am fully aware of your unrest, your fears and your frustrations. Nevertheless, allow me to stress that to date the facts do not support your fears. On the contrary, certainly as far as the European Community as a whole is concerned, never before have qualitative and quantitative levels of our aid been as high as they are today, and I can confirm here that not a single ECU (European currency unit) has been transferred from development aid to assistance to countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, you have to bear in mind that the economic recovery of the Central and Eastern European countries offers additional markets and opportunities for co-operation to all countries of the world.

At the same time, I draw your attention to the fact that as disarmament in the northern hemisphere progresses a "peace dividend", to be targeted primarily towards the poorest countries, becomes available. I hasten to add that it would be highly desirable if the example of the countries of the northern hemisphere, with their drastic disarmament and their reduction of military budgets, were to be followed by the countries of the southern hemisphere, which still devote an average of 20 per cent of their public spending to arms. They too would then be able to allocate more budgetary resources for civilian purposes. If non-aggression

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

treaties are concluded between northern countries, why not also between southern countries or, for example, in the Middle East?

It is obvious that Iraq's aggression against Kuwait constitutes a threat for other countries in the region as well. Belgium, together with the other members of the international community, and basing itself on the resolutions adopted by the Security Council, calls for an immediate Iraqi withdrawal from the territory of Kuwait, for the restoration of its sovereignty, and for the release of all foreign hostages.

Moreover, Belgium is participating in the international solidarity effort. We have dispatched two minesweepers and one supply vessel to the Gulf. Most recently, yesterday, our Government dispatched an additional frigate. We have made available to Egypt two transport aircraft, C-130s, in order to assist in the evacuation of the many refugees. We are going to send four more transport aircraft to the region for purposes of logistic support. Moreover, we have granted 20,000 tons of wheat to Egypt as emergency aid, and we are participating in the financial effort for countries severely affected by the embargo.

United Nations resolutions must be applied ne varietur. They are not negotiable. The United Nations faces an historic task: to enforce its own Charter and international law. Failure now would mean a particularly serious - possibly a fatal - loss of prestige that would lead the United Nations into the kind of situation in which the League of Nations found itself engulfed on the eve of the Second World War. It is thus of paramount importance for the United Nations to keep on taking all further steps needed for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. The economic sanctions are an important, a crucial, experiment. If the world community succeeds in forcing a dictator to respect international law, without this leading

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to armed conflict, an essential precedent for the future of the entire family of nations will have been set.

To restore Kuwait to its former status is, however, not sufficient to bring about a new equilibrium in the Middle East. The international community will have to strive for the prohibition of chemical weapons in the region, for the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, and for the reduction of levels of conventional weapons in general. Mechanisms for preventing conflict have to be taken into consideration. Hence, the idea was conceived of following the example of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and of bringing about for the Middle East a CSCME, a "Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Middle East", similar to the one existing for East-West relations.

To achieve lasting stability and security in the Middle East, the other regional conflicts, and in particular the Palestinian question and the problems of Lebanon, have also to be addressed. The proposals made here in New York last Monday by the President of France, Mr. Mitterrand, go along the same lines as those that Belgium has been advocating.

Moreover, Belgium attaches the greatest importance to the most intensive possible economic, industrial and technological co-operation with the countries of the Arab world. The European Community is looking forward to intensifying the Euro-Arab dialogue and wishes to establish co-operation schemes with the Gulf States, with the members of the UMA - the Maghreb countries - and with other regional organizations in the Arab world. Europeans and Arabs are both heirs to great and old cultures and our respective religions should teach us tolerance, mutual understanding and solidarity.

The East-West entente is giving the United Nations, its Secretary-General and the specialized agencies of the United Nations much greater freedom of action than

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they have ever had in the past. We hope that this will transform the United Nations into an effective tool for world peace and co-operation in years to come at a global and fully effective and appropriate level.

Belgium, being a candidate for the Security Council at the elections to be held this year, assures the Assembly that as a member of the Council we would endeavour to strengthen the positive influence of the United Nations and would favour its assuming its full responsibilities wherever and whenever required.

All these considerations can, however, not do away with the fact that the countries of the North have the sacred duty to go beyond their statements of solidarity and that they have effectively to practise solidarity with other countries of the third world through structures of economic and political co-operation.

It is precisely in that context that we have to evaluate the solving of a number of regional problems and conflicts.

The recent breakthrough concerning the conflict in Cambodia strengthens our hopes for the part which our Organization, its Secretary-General and the permanent members of the Security Council can play there as well. In particular, with respect to the establishment of a transitory administration and the holding of free elections, the United Nations should be in a position to shoulder its responsibilities. That would be the best safeguard against a return to the excesses of the Khmer Rouge. I want to stress here our common commitment to see human rights respected in Cambodia and to see the horrors of the recent past relegated to the pages of history.

(Mr. Eyskens, Belgium)

Recent developments in Africa demonstrate that the call for more freedom and respect for the human person is not without echo on the continent. In a growing number of African countries there is an increasingly clear trend towards more democratic political structures.

We welcome the efforts that are being made to solve the problems in Angola and Mozambique, as well as the first steps towards a multiracial democracy in South Africa. In the recent past, such developments were mere dreams. Namibia's recent accession to independence and the way in which that independence was achieved prove that it is possible to make such dreams come true peacefully.

A number of seemingly less burning issues, too, have their importance for the future of mankind. One of those issues - and this is my last thought - is the protection of Antarctica. It is not enough to convert that continent into a nuclear-free peace zone; we must strengthen environmental protection in what is a particularly vulnerable territory.

Belgium has done pioneering work in adopting legislation forbidding its nationals from participating in the exploitation of mineral resources on Antarctica.

We expect the Antarctic system similarly to make the greatest efforts and to adopt measures to safeguard the future of the continent.

The world offers the image of light and shadow, of great hope and great concern. As a faithful Member of the United Nations, and as a future member - so we hope - of the Security Council, Belgium will do its utmost to co-operate with all the countries of goodwill that strive for peace in justice.

Mr. VAN DEN BROEK (Netherlands): May I, first of all, extend to Mr. de Marco my congratulations on his election as President of this Assembly. With someone of his wisdom and experience in the Chair, the Assembly is undoubtedly in good hands. He can count on the constructive co-operation of the Netherlands

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

delegation. Obviously, Mr. Vice-President, these remarks apply to you also and to the other officers of the Assembly.

Secondly, I extend a warm welcome to Liechtenstein, a new Member of this family of nations. Earlier this week my Italian counterpart, Mr. De Michelis, presented the common position of the 12 States members of the European Comunity on a wide range of international issues. That allows me to concentrate on a few subjects that have my country's special attention.

So far, 1990 has been a year of spectacular success in international political affairs, but, as we all know, it has also witnessed a serious setback. The cold war - a costly and sometimes frightening confrontation between East and West - is over. The democratization of the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries has freed Europe from an old antagonism and has paved the way for increasing co-operation in arms control, trade, cultural exchanges, human rights and environmental protection.

The forthcoming unification of Germany symbolizes this process of peaceful change - the healing of a once-bitterly-divided Europe. We rejoice with our German friends, who are also our neighbours, that the unity that they have long sought will finally become reality on 3 October.

The improved climate between East and West also positively influences multilateral co-operation, as is proved by the handling by the United Nations of the present crisis in the Gulf. The immediate cause of that crisis represents a dramatic step backward in international relations. It is a saddening paradox that, while in one part of the world - on the European continent - new policies have made possible improved relations and a process of substantial arms reductions, in another part of the world brutal force is again being used to settle political differences. Whatever disputes Iraq may have had with Kuwait, nothing can justify its naked aggression against a sovereign State Member of the United Nations.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

The very core of the United Nations Charter - the maintenance of peace and the prevention of aggression - is at stake. It is heartening to observe that the United Nations is at last fulfilling its historic missions. Consensus between the great Powers has been instrumental in this. Fortunately it is now more widely realized that greater power brings greater responsibility. We therefore welcome the action that the Security Council has taken in response to Iraq's aggression, at the heart of which lies its call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, for the release of hostages, and for the restoration of the legitimate Government of that country. The Kingdom of the Netherlands fully supports the implementation of the Council's resolutions. Dutch naval and air forces have been made available to help ensure compliance with the embargo resolutions against Iraq and to contribute to security in the Gulf.

We strongly condemn the actions taken by Iraq against foreign nationals in Kuwait and Iraq and against diplomatic missions in Kuwait. We hold the Government of Iraq responsible under international law for its manipulation of innocent civilians for purposes of international blackmail.

It is our sincere hope that this conflict will be resolved peacefully. But we should always remember that it is Iraq that broke the peace in the first place. Its shameless annexation of Kuwait could not be left unanswered. Sometimes the countering of might with might is unavoidable, as is being underscored by more than 25 United Nations Members that have deployed forces in the region. Far from harbouring aggressive thoughts of their own, they seek to uphold world order. The alternative is chaos and a free-for-all, from which everyone - not just the small and weak - would suffer. The sad story of the League of Nations has taught the world that we must stand firm and united in the face of aggression.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

Just as in Europe, we should prefer to see regional solutions to the regional problems in the Middle East. In principle, therefore, we understand the call for an Arab solution to the conflict. We are dealing here, however, with the aggression of an Arab State against another Arab State; and it is at the request of Arab States, which feel threatened by Iraq, that countries outside the region have come to their aid. Moreover, international aggression and violent conquest transcend the confines of the region, because they strike at the heart of the United Nations Charter. Finally, legitimate interest in the stability of that part of the world is certainly not limited to the region itself. It should therefore be clear that an Arab solution cannot be a substitute for Security Council resolutions but could only take shape subject to Iraq's full compliance with them.

Meanwhile an embargo that is strictly abided by and properly enforced offers the best, if not the last, hope for a peaceful settlement of this conflict. In this context we welcome the adoption yesterday of Security Council resolution 670 (1990), containing measures that further tighten the embargo. It is another clear signal to Iraq that time is not working in its favour and that aggression does not pay. Aggression entails human suffering and disastrous damage to the international economy - the most vulnerable economies in particular. The Netherlands, together with its partners in the European Community, is committed to extending assistance to these countries to enable them to fulfil their obligations under the Security Council resolutions.

Effective international co-operation within the framework of the United Nations has taken on a new dimension. By applying the instruments provided for in Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the world shows its willingness to unite for collective security. In recent years we have seen successful United Nations peace-keeping efforts, permitted by propitious international political conditions. If Iraq complies with the Security Council's resolutions and withdraws from Kuwait,

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the situation thereafter could very well require deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping force.

If, however, Iraq continues to refuse to comply with them and persists in its illegal occupation of Kuwait, additional action, consistent with the United Nations Charter, will be called for to enforce the restoration of peace. Clearly, if that situation should arise - and we all hope it will not - we look to the United Nations as the instrument for enforcement. Our fervent hope that we shall reach a peaceful solution should not prevent us from being prepared for such a contingency.

Our objectives are clear, but we do not know how, in the end, they will be achieved. What we do know is that this crisis is a test for the political resolve of the international community and of the United Nations. Chapter VII, regarded at the time of drafting as a great innovation, has never been applied so comprehensively. This crisis is an important demonstration of the possibilities of multilateral action for upholding vital principles of a just world order.

The Netherlands remains deeply concerned by the endemic instability of the Middle East. The Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian problem and the situation in Lebanon are still unresolved. Any link between the solution of these problems and the Iraqi aggression should, however, be firmly rejected, as this would only give the appearance of justice to an unjust cause and thereby frustrate solution of the Gulf crisis.

Why is the Middle East such a powder-keg, such a warehouse packed full of arms, ready to explode at any time? Why is there no development towards stability and peaceful change, comparable to the one we are witnessing in other parts of the world? It seems to us that a crucial political precondition is missing as long as there are parties that do not accept reality as it is, but constantly try to

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

postpone the inevitable. I refer to the contempt for existing borders, to the negation of existing statehood and to the disregard for legitimate political aspirations. It is hard to believe that peace will come to the Middle East as long as Israel feels insecure because it is not accepted by its Arab neighbours. Equally, there will be no peace for Israel as long as it does not permit Palestinian self-determination in the occupied territories.

We believe that a declared state of non-belligerency between the countries of the region is essential for the revival of the peace process. Therefore we call upon the Arab States formally to end the state of war with Israel and normalize relations with that country in the context of the peace process. Equally, we call upon Israel to comply with resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) within the framework of a comprehensive peace agreement.

Furthermore, in our view dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians remains indispensable. Even if one has to admit that the opportunities which presented themselves during the past years have been missed and that the prospects for peace have been undermined by the position the Palestine Liberation Organization has adopted in the Gulf crisis, we nevertheless remain convinced that there is no other way ahead for Israel and the Palestinians than to demonstrate mutual recognition of fundamental rights and legitimate aspirations. Subsequent to the solution of the Gulf crisis, a renewed and determined effort by the international community is needed to induce the parties concerned to accept these prerequisites and to cross the threshold on the arduous road to a lasting peace.

With the lessons of the past in mind, notably in Europe, it seems that more democracy, more respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, in combination with more arms control instead of arms build-up, are vital ingredients to be more emphatically inserted into the Middle East peace process if durable stability and security are to be attained.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

While the positive trend in both nuclear and conventional arms control between East and West is very encouraging, such progress is distinctly lacking in other parts of the world, as the Gulf crisis shows. The Middle East especially is the scene of a rapid arms build-up. Weapons of every description - conventional, chemical, biological - are concentrated there on a huge scale whereas nuclear weapons seem to be imminent. Various means for delivery of such weapons are available in the region, including missiles, some of them with considerable reach.

Let existing instruments be fully applied to reverse this arms race, both world wide and in the region. As for the danger of nuclear arms proliferation, there must be recognition of the vital need to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. All States of the region should become parties to that Treaty. The Treaty's safeguard system should be utilized in full, so as to include special inspections.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

In the same vein, the biological weapons Treaty must become a more effective barrier against proliferation. It should be reinforced by area-wide accession and full ratification, further confidence-building measures and, ultimately, a credible verification régime. We will be putting forward proposals to that end at next year's review conference.

It goes without saying that the Gulf crisis can only strengthen the urgency of a global ban on chemical weapons. After 20 years of negotiations, an effectively verifiable treaty with universal participation is long overdue. 1992 should really be not only our target but also our deadline. The Netherlands fully supports the Australian and French proposal to hold a ministerial conference early next year to provide the necessary political impetus. I would remind representatives that the Netherlands has offered to host the envisaged chemical weapons treaty organization.

In the mean time, measures to stop further proliferation of biological and chemical weapons and their precursors as well as missiles and their technology are indispensable. The Netherlands recently joined the Missile Technology Control Régime.

An arms build-up is mainly a result and not a cause of tension as the cold war has taught us. That explains why we soon expect to sign a comprehensive treaty on the substantial reduction of conventional forces in Europe. In other regions of the world these political pre-conditions are not yet fulfilled, so it may be hard for countries to feel secure enough to restrict themselves in this respect. That is why we feel it is so important that the ground rules for stability in the Middle East which I referred to before, find acceptance. These should pave the way for more comprehensive security arrangements in which confidence-building measures and conventional arms control have a prominent place, and they will help to counter proliferation of weapons in the region. We should realize, however, that there

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

will always remain a dilemma between legitimate security needs, on the one hand, and the objective of avoiding an arms race, on the other. In this context, we shall also have to look at ways and means to restrain arms exports - a subject which has been broached for the first time in the United Nations.

Let me now strike a positive note. The combination of greatly improved East-West relations and the better functioning of the United Nations has a wholesome effect on the quest for solutions to regional conflicts. In a number of cases this has inspired the local or regional parties to stop feuding and start looking for a fair and lasting compromise. The prospects for resolving the conflict in Cambodia and the prospects for fundamental change in South Africa give rise to some optimism.

The comprehensive peace plan which the Five have developed for Cambodia contain a solid framework for the four warring factions to settle their differences and free their sorrowing country from the scourge of war and repression. The recent acceptance of the plan by the Cambodian parties, and their further agreement as to the details of the arrangement, should allow the country to make a safe transition to a democratic political system, with its sovereignty restored. The Cambodians must finally be free from the killing fields and from foreign interventions. We welcome the decision that Cambodia will be represented in the United Nations and elsewhere by the newly founded Supreme National Council. And if the Netherlands should be called upon to contribute to United Nations efforts to implement the peace plan, such a request will meet with positive consideration.

Notwithstanding our deep concern over recent violence, South Africa offers a ray of hope. Here we find two courageous leaders who have decided to bury the hatchet and endeavour to build a common future. The road ahead is full of

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

obstacles. After 40 years of apartheid, its pillars still basically stand upright, but apartheid is to be dismantled. These leaders have to tear down the walls of distrust and bring the various groups in South Africa into the constitutional dialogue. They have to write a new language - one of conciliation and mutual respect - in a country which is used to the language of hatred and the practice of violence. They have to open up perspectives for peaceful change in a society split apart by deep divisions between the haves and the have-nots. In other words, their task is of Herculean proportions. And yet there is reason for hope as both parties combine goodwill with good sense. After years of vigorous support of the anti-apartheid struggle, the international community is now under an obligation to support the actual constructive forces of change in South Africa. We feel that a policy of encouraging the peaceful transition to a democratic South Africa in which all citizens enjoy equal rights is fully justified. Therefore, tangible progress on the road towards a complete dismantling of apartheid should, in our view, go hand in hand with a corresponding relaxation of economic pressures on South Africa.

Let us not forget Korea. In that country a start has been made on unfreezing the situation between North and South. While waiting for a further improvement of the relations between North and South Korea, we call for adequate representation of the Korean people in the United Nations.

Popular demand for democracy and the craving for human rights are growing stronger year after year. The human rights debate should not be permeated by a North-South divide. From Latin America to East Asia and from Eastern Europe to Africa, people cry out for freedom, underlining time and again that human rights are truly universal values.

As we welcome the end of the cold war, we also welcome a new perspective for the United Nations in the field of human rights. United Nations human rights

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

standards have always provided clear and uncompromising criteria by which the conduct and achievement of Governments could be measured. Now a sustained effort can be made to strengthen the supervisory machinery which is so important if respect for human rights is really to be improved. In the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) mechanisms have been established which, more than the United Nations body of norms, provide States with specific detailed procedures to hold each other accountable for violations of human rights. The same may be true for the new norms which have been developed in the CSCE for compliance with the requisites of free elections and the rule of law. Here, as elsewhere, regional and United Nations systems should reinforce each other.

No political order will last very long if it does not permit change. In fact, the United Nations concept of world order has always been a combination of collective security and peaceful change. Concentrating on restoring the peace in the Gulf or elsewhere, however necessary and justified, is not enough. We must at the same time continue to put our energy into combating poverty, disease, illiteracy, drugs and terrorism, into promoting equitable economic development both domestically and internationally.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

The recent eighteenth special session of this Assembly, on international economic co-operation, has put the world back on the right track in its dialogue on development problems, after long years of fruitless polarization. The Assembly's Declaration represents a fitting start for the formulation and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth Development Decade.

The Gulf crisis now seriously clouds the economic perspectives. Rising energy prices will severely impair development, particularly in third-world countries. Growth figures, debt-service ratios and adjustment programmes will have to be adapted to more pessimistic indicators. There is reason for concern about the possible implications for the multilateral trade negotiations in the Uruguay Round. It is up to all of us to find a means of safeguarding the developing countries, and especially the least developed countries, from severe setbacks in their economic and social progress. The Netherlands has recently taken the initiative to propose a collective cancellation of official bilateral debt to severely indebted poorest countries which implement sound economic policies.

Just as it is difficult to imagine safeguarding international peace without at the same time striving to promote social peace, it is equally difficult to imagine that either can survive in the long run without an ecological balance - in short, green peace. Life on Earth for future generations could very well be endangered if man does not make peace with nature. And if not peace, then at least a cease-fire. The threats are real enough: warming of the atmosphere, depletion of the ozone layer, acid rain, expanding deserts and reckless deforestation - to pick just a few from a growing list. It is indeed most urgent that we act, if only to stop further deterioration. We simply cannot afford the luxury of waiting for irrefutable scientific proof as to what precisely causes the different problems confronting us. We should not allow ourselves the benefit of the doubt.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

It is crucial now to move towards the early conclusion of a world climate convention which should put an effective stop to such related phenomena as warming of the atmosphere, depletion of the ozone layer and deforestation. We are happy to observe that the recent London Conference reached agreement on the total banning of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by the year 2000.

Our endeavours to protect the atmosphere, and indeed the environment as a whole, can only be successful with the full participation of the developing countries. The industrialized countries have an obligation to help these already overburdened nations by providing, among others, facilitating funds. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992, should set the seal on world-wide agreements on concrete measures for the protection of the environment and the restoration of the damage already inflicted, while taking account of the special position of the developing countries. The Netherlands will continue to play an active role in its preparation. In this context, I should like to mention a high-level meeting on human settlements and sustainable development in November, which will be hosted by my country.

Both the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the negotiations on new conventions, such as a world climate convention, serve as an opportunity to vest the United Nations with new crisis management and enforcement powers ensuring compliance with environmental standards. We should seize these opportunities in an adequate manner. After all, conditions of life on Earth, and therewith the world's security, are at stake.

In conclusion, the Gulf crisis has once again made the world aware of the great value of a properly functioning United Nations. We sincerely hope that, after long years of stagnation, the United Nations will be able to enhance its role in the enforcement of collective security and the promotion of peaceful change. The United Nations should also seize upon the present opportunity to resume the

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

work on the reform and the streamlining of its organization, which has begun in the last few years. The Netherlands has traditionally been an ardent supporter of the Organization. We will do our share of the work involved in strengthening this world Organization and equally in strengthening international law in all its dimensions, including promotion of a greater recourse to the International Court of Justice, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization.

"With all its imperfections, the United Nations Organization offers the peace-loving nations of the world now a fully workable mechanism which will give them peace, if they want peace. To be sure, no piece of social machinery, however well constructed, can be effective unless there is, back of it, a will and determination to make it work."

Those words of one of the fathers of the United Nations were true in 1945 and are no less valid in 1990.

Let us make it work.

Mr. BOOH-BOOH (Cameroon) (interpretation from French): This forty-fifth session of the General Assembly is being held in a new international setting. The cold war is coming to an end and the arms race is clearly slowing down. Numerous conflicts are approaching a solution. And, despite continued imbalances and profound economic injustice, the initiation of dialogue is once again possible because of the growing interdependence of peoples and nations. All of us must respond to certain major challenges.*

These facts impart special significance to this session of the Assembly and compel us to derive the fullest possible benefit from it in order to contribute to the advent of a world of justice, peace and liberty.

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* Mr. Flemming (Saint Lucia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

In this connection, I should like to congratulate Mr. Guido de Marco on his outstanding election as President of the Assembly. His great experience and qualities, together with the dynamism and far-sighted policies of his country, the Republic of Malta, within the great family of non-aligned countries and of the United Nations in general, prompt us all to believe that he will discharge most successfully the lofty functions which have been conferred upon him. I can assure him of the constant support of the Cameroonian delegation.

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

Major-General Joseph Garba of Nigeria, his predecessor, deserves our renewed thanks for the diligence and dynamism with which he conducted not only the work of the forty-fourth session but also the work of subsequent special sessions.

We wish to reiterate our support for the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. Cameroon encourages him to continue unrelentingly the efforts he has deployed so admirably throughout the world for the cause of peace and international co-operation, efforts the success of which is emphatically demonstrated by the recent independence of Namibia.

Lastly, we wish to congratulate the Principality of Liechtenstein on its admission as the 160th Member of the Organization, whose universality thus continues to grow.

Less than 10 years before the third millennium, the fundamental changes which have occurred in the world since the last session of the Assembly have reshaped the international political chequer-board.

Generally speaking the highly symbolic image of the collapse of the Berlin Wall has in a very positive sense reduced the East-West tensions which, since the last war, had so greatly influenced world relations. In such a favourable international climate, dialogue has been restored to favour and is consequently a source of hope in response to the major challenges posed by freedoms, development and science in the closing years of the century.

Peace is at our door: that is the message sent to us by détente, the opening up of East Europe and the significant improvement in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. That message is strengthened by the progress made in the field of disarmament.

In this connection the results of the various Soviet-American summit meetings and agreements have been most encouraging, as are the various conclusions and

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

recommendations of the work of the Conference on Disarmament and the Fourth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

We particularly welcome the consensus in the Conference on Disarmament on questions pertaining to South Africa's nuclear capacity, conventional disarmament and the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We very much trust that the peace dividends resulting from the slackening of the arms race will be devoted to the financing of development, particularly that of the poor countries. The now-acknowledged link between disarmament and development would thus be translated into reality.

It is essential that the remarkable improvement in the international political climate bolster our attempts to find solutions to the numerous conflicts which still afflict various parts of the world. Namibia's accession to independence is still fresh in our memories. We wish to take this opportunity yet again to welcome most cordially among us the presence of that young State as a fully fledged Member of the Organization. The international community, which worked so hard to bring this about, must now provide that country with all the necessary assistance to enable it to consolidate its sovereignty, recover its territorial integrity and promote its economic and social development. Cameroon will certainly spare no effort to develop and strengthen comprehensive co-operation with that brother country.

With reference to the situation in South Africa, notwithstanding the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, the announcement of a number of reforms and the commencement of a dialogue between the racist régime and the opposition movements, it remains a source of grave concern because the pillars of the odious system of apartheid are still solidly in place, sustaining a disguised form of racist terror which we condemn.

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

In this context, the international community must keep in place economic sanctions against that régime until it has been shown proof of fundamental, irreversible change in the situation. The objective is not to reform but to eradicate apartheid completely and to set up a free, democratic and non-racial society in South Africa.

In Angola and in Mozambique, Cameroon has noted and wishes to encourage the moves made by the leaders of those countries to establish lasting domestic peace. We also support the efforts of the Secretary-General to implement the solutions advocated by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in respect of the conflict in Western Sahara.

In the Horn of Africa, as well as between Chad and Libya, or again between Senegal and Mauritania, the needs of peace today require a response from all concerned. Dialogue is the way to salvation.

It is with this in mind that the African Heads of State and Government at the last summit meeting of the OAU in Addis Ababa reaffirmed their determination to work together towards a rapid solution of all these conflicts by African efforts and initiatives.

In the Middle East the situation is still tense. We remain convinced in respect of the Arab-Israeli conflict that any equitable solution must necessarily involve recognition of the fundamental right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to have their own homeland, as well as the equally fundamental right of the State of Israel to live in peace within secure and internationally recognized frontiers.

Given the complexity of this situation and its ability to jeopardize world peace, we wish to reiterate our support for the idea of convening, under United Nations auspices, an international conference devoted to this important issue.

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

The cause of peace must also prevail in respect of the critical conflict in the Persian Gulf. The military invasion and occupation of Kuwait and the build-up of troops and various types of armaments may push that region, already quite turbulent, into a particularly explosive situation fraught with incalculable consequences.

The international community must pay full attention to this situation. We must act with the greatest restraint and avoid any action capable of exacerbating the situation. The United Nations must act collectively in accordance with the principles of the Charter, focusing particularly on dialogue and broad-based agreement as a way to provide a peaceful settlement of this grave crisis. In any case, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the State of Kuwait must be restored.

In other parts of the world where focal points of tension continue to exist, we must spare no effort to secure the triumph of the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter, particularly non-resort to force in international relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In this regard Cameroon welcomes the initiatives now under way in the Korean peninsula to foster a peaceful rapprochement of the two Korean States. Moreover, we hope that the encouraging results achieved in recent negotiations on Cambodia, just endorsed by the Security Council, will be translated into practical achievements.

In the same spirit we encourage everything that has been undertaken to restore peace in Central America, the Caribbean and other parts of the world.

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

Lastly, we welcome the praiseworthy efforts which led to the agreements on the reunification of the two Germanys, with which Cameroon has enjoyed excellent relations of friendship and co-operation. My country is fully prepared to continue and intensify its relations with a reunited Germany.

Unfortunately, the positive developments on the present international political scene contrast starkly with the world economic situation. This situation, which is markedly unfavourable to the countries of the third world, is characterized by profound structural imbalances: on the one hand, the economies of the countries of the North, which are flourishing, and, on the other, the economies of most of the South, which are in a state of crisis. The shift in world monetary, economic and financial flows and the consequent redistribution of the poles of development are each day gradually marginalizing the poor nations.

The constant decline in commodity prices, the excessive indebtedness of the developing countries, the diminution of aid, the reversal of net financial flows towards the developed countries, and the inexorable degradation of the environment all remain the essential features of the world economic situation.

Africa, more than any other continent, finds itself in very great difficulty. In addition to the ills to which I have just alluded, it has to face natural disasters also, such as drought, desertification, floods, epidemics, famine, invasion by locusts - all of which increase the constraints associated with the adoption of various structural adjustment programmes.

The present unprecedented situation of our continent has been exacerbated particularly by the external debt crisis, which absorbs the bulk of our countries' export earnings. That is why we continue to support all initiatives aimed at finding a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the debt problem.

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

We remain convinced that the United Nations, which has already adopted a programme for the economic recovery and development of Africa, can provide a decisive impetus to this undertaking.

Cameroon welcomes the debt-relief and debt-cancellation measures adopted in recent years by the Summit of the Seven as well as by certain developing countries, such as France, Canada, the United States and Belgium.

In another sphere, we hope that the interventions of the Common Fund for commodities and the various corrective and compensatory machinery provided for in the new Lomé Convention for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries will provide the desired effects.

The results of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation and, in particular, to the revitalization of the economic growth and development of the developing countries and the results of the Paris Conference on the Least-Developed Countries are without any doubt an important milestone in our collective quest for solutions to the international economic crisis.

None the less, we remain convinced that if they are to have any effect these bilateral initiatives and measures must be integrated in the broader framework of strengthening the North-South dialogue through negotiations in which the focus would be on the interrelationship of the issues of growth, security and development. Hence the importance of the new international development strategy for the fourth development decade, which we trust will be adopted at this session of the Assembly. That strategy will provide an opportunity to gauge the magnitude of the new political will that has resulted from the work of the eighteenth special session, to which I have referred.

This applies also to the Uruguay Round of negotiations, which will enter their final phase this December and which will, we hope, lead to the adoption of

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equitable measures for the strengthening of our countries' commercial competitiveness.

Given the global nature of the threat to the environment and its close relationship to development, it is urgently necessary to define common objectives and adopt appropriate measures.

These concerns were echoed in the Pan-African Co-ordination Conference on the environment and lasting development in Africa, to be held in Bamako, Mali, in December 1990, and the proclamation by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) of 1991 as the African Year for the Environment.

This is true also of the international Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992.

All these gatherings should provide us with an opportunity to seek together ways and means of solving problems such as the shrinking of the ozone layer, drought, pollution, desertification, acid rain and floods, in order better to protect the environment and guarantee the equilibrium of our whole ecosystem.

With regard to the negotiations now under way within the framework of the Preparatory Commission for the International Sea-Bed Authority and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, so far these have made appreciable progress, in particular with regard to the registration of the first pioneer investors and the agreement on the implementation of obligations entered into by those investors and respective certifying States.

It is essential, however, to overcome the pending difficulties speedily, in a spirit of compromise, in order to facilitate the entry into force of the Convention, while promoting universal participation in the new legal régime for the seas and oceans.

One of the major challenges we must face at the end of this century is that of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The upheavals now taking place throughout

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the world are evidence of the keen interest in this important question. We welcome the active role played by the United Nations in this field.

The holding within a few days at the Headquarters of our Organization of a World Summit for Children is a further illustration of this kind of activity, which has my Government's full support.

In Africa, significant progress has been made in the sphere of human rights. The African Charter of the Rights of Man and Peoples has entered into force, and the Commission charged with monitoring its implementation has been set up.

At their recent summit meeting at Addis Ababa the Heads of State and Government of the OAU made an important declaration reaffirming their commitment to the strengthening of democracy and the protection of human rights in Africa.

With respect more precisely to democracy, the President of the Republic of Cameroon, Paul Biya, has reminded us that

> "Democracy is built day by day, and no one is safe from a false move. We are moving through the necessary phases, and doing this at our own pace, taking into account our capabilities and the needs peculiar to our country".

In Cameroon the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which has always been at the heart of the philosophy and activities of the Government of Renewal, has been given significant impetus by the adoption of major measures covering, in particular, the strengthening of freedom of the press, revision of the law on freedom of association to make it more liberal, abolition of emergency legislation, and creation of a human rights commission.

Thus, Africa, in general, and Cameroon, in particular, are firmly convinced that the quest for human rights and fundamental freedoms is a universal and legitimate aspiration. But these rights and freedoms, which are certainly powerful factors for development, require in turn for their full blossoming viable economic

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and social conditions. Therefore there is an undeniable built-in dynamic relationship between human rights, democracy and development.

We are now in the midst of a period of fertile historical change reflected in the number of events generated between States and even within nations. While we cannot predict the future with certainty, we can safely believe that mankind now has available to it, thanks to the enormous progress of science and technology, a whole set of means which, when put at the service of our common good, can move us towards a happier future.

(Mr. Booh-Booh, Cameroon)

Each day that passes strengthens the ties between the various parts of our planet. In the light of the numerous challenges facing our age, this calls for collective action and the strengthening of the institutions of interdependence, broad-based agreement and co-operation. In this perspective, the United Nations remains the most appropriate framework in which to harmonize the views of all nations for common purposes. The grave crisis it experienced in the 1980s enabled it to carry out worthwhile reforms to increase its efficiency of operation. It is to be hoped that with renewed political will the Member States will give it the means to work as it should.

The fathers of our Organization conceived - through the purposes, principles and objectives of the Charter - an ideal world based upon peace, international co-operation and the well-being of all. The dawn of the third millennium, by virtue of the great hopes it has aroused, offers the opportunity so far to enter a decisive phase in the progress of mankind towards that better world.

Mr. FRUTOS VAESKEN (Paraguay) (interpretation from Spanish): At the outset I should like to congratulate the President on his election to his high office at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Because of his great intellectual and moral qualities we are convinced he will be able to conduct our work with the utmost competence and resolve.

We extend the greetings of our Government to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and express our satisfaction at his excellent performance with regard to the tasks entrusted to him.

We also wish to join with those delegations that have expressed satisfaction at the admission to membership in the United Nations of the principality of Liechtenstein and the Republic of Namibia.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

We have come to this forum convinced of the continuing validity of the major purposes and principles set forth in the Charter. The important changes that have taken place in the world make it possible to predict an era of peace and good will among people and of increased understanding between the super-Powers and co-operation and assistance among all nations.

In this international context the United Nations is acquiring new importance as a forum for the co-ordination of national and regional activities and as an instrument indispensable to world peace and security. The work done by the Security Council has been essential to the strengthening of the Organization, and its recent action has reaffirmed the need for multilateralism.

The Republic of Paraguay shares and fully supports the thrust of the Security Council resolutions clearly and categorically condemning the invasion of Kuwait and adopting measures to deter the aggression.

The rights of independence, territorial integrity and free exercise of sovereignty by a State are essential to the very existence of the international legal order. Without full and complete respect for such rights, peace among the community of nations is inconceivable. For that reason Paraguay has not only publicly condemned that aggression against a Member State of our Organization but, in strict compliance with the provisions adopted by the Security Council, also has taken measures we have already reported. We take this opportunity to encourage the Secretary-General to undertake new efforts to solve the conflict within the framework of the United Nations.

Paraguay, which has always had very close links of co-operation with the Federal Republic of Germany, cannot fail to express its satisfaction with the decision of the German States to reunite in a single great nation.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

We hail the trend towards the normalization of internal relations in the Republic of South Africa and we support any reform which, with the consent of the various sectors that make up South African society, will lead to the full integration of all of its citizens without discrimination.

We note with concern that solution of the problem of the Middle East is not yet within the grasp of the Organization. Paraguay will endorse any initiative that will lead to the peaceful solution of the differences separating the peoples of Israel and the Arab States and that takes account of the Palestinian people's right to its own homeland and the State of Israel's right to live in peace within its own borders.

Signs of a possible negotiated end to the long-standing conflict in Cambodia have been strengthened by the decisions of the parties to accept a peace plan and a broad solution with the help of the United Nations. Paraguay is pleased to support those steps and urges the parties concerned to take advantage of this historic opportunity for peace and reconciliation for the Cambodian people.

We also wish to take this opportunity to express our Government's solidarity with the constant efforts of the Republic of Korea to achieve through dialogue reconciliation of the Korean people in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We hope that in the near future the people of Korea will be represented in our midst.

The question of disarmament continues to be a priority issue for our Organization. The new climate of confidence and dialogue established between the super-Powers gives us hope that part of the resources used for the production of armaments can be redirected towards helping development.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

Peace and security can be achieved only by taking the needs of people into account and considering the causes and sources of violence. Given the dimensions of various world problems, we are all very much aware of the dangers of nuclear confrontation. The need to give full effect to human rights and fundamental freedoms has been one of the main concerns of the democratic Government of my country established after the elections of 1 May 1989. Political will has made it possible for our country to be counted among those States Members of the Organization that fully respect human rights. My country's Government is making great efforts to adapt its legislation so that it may be among the most advanced in this respect and to disseminate fundamental principles in order to train its people in knowledge of an respect for human rights. To that end we are being assisted by the Organization. For the first time, with the co-operation of the United Nations, we held a seminar on human rights last July. Our national Government attaches the greatest importance to the well-being of children and therefore welcomed with satisfaction news of the convening of a United Nations summit conference at which practical measures can be discussed and decisions adopted with a view to solving problems affecting children.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

On the national level and in our bilateral relations, specific measures are being adopted to strengthen our country's legal and institutional instruments in order to control the illicit production and traffic of dangerous drugs more effectively. At the same time, co-operation programmes are being established within the legal framework of the agreements we have recently signed with neighbouring countries and with the United States for more effective joint action. Along the same lines, Paraguay ratified the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

We believe that in our country and the world at large, tangible progress has been made in the struggle against the illegal traffic and consumption of drugs. We will continue our struggle to ensure that by educating our youth and creating better social conditions, the consumption of drugs will no longer be attractive. Our Government, committed to a better future for mankind, is bent on helping to adopt all measures to preserve our natural resources for future generations, and expresses its determination to adopt and implement all measures necessary towards that end.

In 1992, 500 years after its discovery, America will once again express its hopes for a better world for humanity when the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is held in Brazil. Thirty years ago, in 1960, we launched the first United Nations Development Programme and we prepared an action strategy. Nevertheless, the problems of the developing countries are far from being solved. We still have serious obstacles to the expansion of our trade. Instead of a growing transfer of resources from the industrialized nations to our countries, the opposite is true. The prices of our commodities are declining in real terms and all our efforts to capitalize are thus fruitless. Technical assistance and the transfer of technology, particularly to countries of average development, which need it most, our ever-dwindling financial resources and

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

external debt are some of our problems that seem unsolvable or only partially solvable.

We are fully convinced that it is indispensable to deal with the social and economic problems of our international society in a global fashion by adopting measures that will effectively change the very structure of the world economy, thus creating a new, more just international economic order. No future strategy can have definitive results if it does not include structural reforms.

With the end of the East-West conflict we can conceive of a community of nations investing all its strengths in a new type of struggle, in which North and South, united in common ideals, will strive to put an end to the main causes of human suffering. We aspire to a world of integration, co-operation, assistance for development, and not merely a world of peaceful coexistence.

For Paraguay integration is a comprehensive factor for development as the best political and economic means to achieve a future for Latin America. That is why we have accepted an invitation to participate in a process begun by Argentina and Brazil, and also involving Chile and Uruguay. Paraguay's pro-integration position is expressed not only in the declaration of principles set forth in our national Constitution, but also in our deeply rooted links with our neighbours on the American continent, both in commercial enterprises such as power-generation and infrastructure, as well as in joint efforts such as the Paraguay-Parana waterway. We hope that this decade will be known in America as the decade of integration, and we are sure that it will benefit our peoples. America must comply with the historic mandate of unity.

President Bush's Americas initiative has been welcomed by the countries of the hemisphere, and expresses the spirit of unity and continental solidarity and the intention of the Government of the United States to help developing countries. In that respect, the countries of the South American common market region have adopted

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a joint position with regard to arriving at a specific agreement with the United States Government.

Since the advent of democracy, a freely elected Government was established in my country under the leadership of President Andres Rodriguez, with full respect for human rights and legitimacy. One of our first tasks has been the reform of legal and institutional instruments, allowing us to ensure full exercise of democracy in our country. We can thus point to the repeal of repressive laws; the adoption by our National Congress of a new electoral code incorporating Paraguay's legislation in institutions appropriate to modern participatory democracy; the convening in 1991 of the first direct municipal elections in the history of Paraguay; and the restoration of a sincere climate of tolerance and dialogue in our country between all political parties, without ideological prejudice. We have respect and guarantees for the right of assembly. Workers' associations are free to express themselves through trade unions, and there are no political prisoners in our country. In the economic sphere, the Government has accepted the responsibility of redressing the country's imbalances by adopting the necessary economic, financial, monetary and exchange policies.

The solution to some problems makes it possible to solve other problems that were overshadowed by the first. The major political and economic reforms that allow us to see a new Paraguay, one filled with hope for greater well-being and happiness, have made it possible to better appreciate the existence of problems that the national Government is today determined to resolve. For that, we need the co-operation and understanding of the United Nations and of friendly nations at a higher level of development.

The major changes that are taking place in the world reaffirm our faith in the destiny of mankind. With the fall of walls and the opening of borders, humanity is moving towards a future in which it can exercise its inalienable rights. The

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changes that have occurred, in America and Europe in particular, constitute above all a triumph of liberty and the right of people to choose their own future and to enjoy the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

America, our America, is experiencing a unique time of democratically elected governments that answer to the demands of the people and have begun to move towards integration. America would like to have a single homeland, the fulfilment of its hopes and dreams.

We reaffirm our confidence in the United Nations. It will continue to be the primary instrument to preserve world peace and, above all, to guarantee the liberties, independence and integrity of peoples and nations, enforce the law, and achieve acceptance of the solution to all disputes.

Mr. BOZER (Turkey): It is a source of particular pleasure for me to see Mr. de Marco, the representative of a fellow Mediterranean country, presiding over this session of the General Assembly. I congratulate him on his well-deserved election to this high post and I am confident that under his able guidance, this session will tackle the problems before it with vision and wisdom, thus making an important contribution to peace and stability.

I also wish to pay a tribute to Major-General Joseph Garba, the President of the Assembly at the forty-fourth session, for his outstanding competence in guiding the work of the General Assembly during a hectic yet fruitful period.

I wish also to thank the Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his singular contribution to the success of the United Nations during this fateful period.

(Mr. Bozer, Turkey)

The current session of the General Assembly has been convened against a background of the momentous events that have taken place during the past 12 months. Indeed, until the invasion and occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in August, this was a time in which tidings of hope and joy were the predominant note. The trends which were gaining momentum as we met last year have started to bear fruit. Having witnessed the crumbling of the Berlin wall, the disintegration of the iron curtain, the collapse of totalitarian régimes and the birth of a new Europe, we can confidently talk about the end of the cold war. I should like to extend my Government's warm congratulations to the two German delegations present here on their having achieved in a smooth and successful way the unification of the German nation under the roof of a democratic and peaceful German State, which will certainly contribute to stability in Europe.

It has been encouraging to observe that the dramatic and positive chain of events remoulding Europe has also helped lessen some of the tensions elsewhere on our planet. In that context, it inspires further hope in us to see that the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) has made remarkable headway in Europe by achieving new milestones in the monitoring of human rights, the strengthening of co-operation on environmental issues and the reinforcement of confidence-building mechanisms, along with increased conventional stability measures.

The world at large has also benefited from the opportunities offered by a Europe at peace with itself. Arms control efforts now proffer a more promising future. Turkey believes that those efforts can be useful only if they are pursued without diminishing the security of the countries concerned. The disarmament process can be beneficial to the extent that it does not reduce the security attained through defence and deterrence. As a corollary to its peace-oriented

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foreign policy, Turkey will continue to contribute to the ongoing endeavours in search of success in both of these processes. Moreover, recalling the confirmation at the Copenhagen meeting of the CSCE of the commitment to abide by the ideals of democracy, pluralism and the rule of law, we believe that respect for human rights, which constitutes the pedestal of this edifice, will assume a higher priority among the domains in which the United Nations is increasingly active.

As international tensions ease and a more favourable climate emerges, the standards and goals set in Copenhagen will not remain confined to Europe and North America but will serve as a paradigm for the whole world in helping promote the cause of human rights.

Running against the tide of history by committing a pre-Second-World-War type of aggression, a Member of the United Nations, itself only recently disengaged from an eight-year war, invaded and occupied the territory of another Member of the United Nations nearly two months ago. That deplorable event occurred in an already volatile part of the globe and has further aggravated a precarious and delicate situation. The United Nations has passed the initial phase of this severe test with remarkable success. The Security Council resolutions promptly adopted in the wake of the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait clearly demonstrated the firm determination of the United Nations to establish the principle that such acts contrary to modern norms of international behaviour shall not be tolerated.

Turkey, situated as it is adjacent to the Middle East and having close historical ties with both of the countries involved in this deplorable affair, attaches the utmost importance to the careful fulfilment of the goals and objectives set out by the Security Council. We also subscribe to the measures foreseen in the relevant Council resolutions and to their strict implementation. My Government is deeply concerned that there is the danger of a conflagration that

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might engulf the entire Middle East unless Iraqi forces are completely and unconditionally withdrawn from Kuwait and the legitimate Kuwaiti Government is restored. Naturally, such a withdrawal and restoration should be coupled with the immediate release of all foreigners held hostage by Iraq. Turkey firmly believes that United Nations sanctions should be fully enforced and holds the opinion that this course of action has the greatest chance to end the current crisis peacefully. It is in that spirit that Turkey will continue to make heavy sacrifices to secure full compliance with the Security Council's resolutions.

Despite many discouraging signs, Turkey hopes that the Gulf crisis can be settled without degenerating into armed conflict. While anticipating a peaceful settlement, we nevertheless consider it imperative that the lessons the crisis has taught should be underlined. First of all, the international community must redouble its efforts aimed at curbing the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, biological and missile technology. Secondly, the determination to work together against threats to peace which has manifested itself between the super-Powers and the other permanent members of the Security Council in the aftermath of the cold war must be maintained.

The cease-fire in the eight-year war between Iran and Iraq, the setting in motion of the process which culminated in Namibia's independence, the arrangements that led to the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, and efforts now under way to resolve conflicts in Cambodia, Central America and Western Sahara could not have been realized had the United Nations not been strengthened by the increasing harmony among the permanent members of the Security Council.

Last year my predecessor had to draw the attention of the Assembly to the tragic situation of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. Since that time, the régime

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in that country has changed, and we are hopeful that the positive developments taking place in Bulgaria will make possible the full recognition of minority rights very soon.

Turkey's firm stand on the question of Palestine, which constitutes the crux of the Middle East dispute, has been expressed from this rostrum on many occasions. The uprising in the West Bank and Gaza is a direct result of the frustration of the Palestinians. The attempts to suppress the rebellion by force and violence are bound to prove futile, especially in the long run. The Palestinians must take due care not to tarnish their image by being provoked into acts that could be construed as a relapse into terrorism. Israel, for its part, must cast aside its intransigence so that the current stalemate in the peace process can be broken. Furthermore, Israel should also halt its systematic attempts to modify the demographic composition of the occupied Arab territories.

The situation in Afghanistan continues to be a source of concern for Turkey. In spite of the fact that much has been accomplished in bringing the conflicting parties together, the need for a broad-based government fully representing the Afghan people still stands out as an essential component in the search for a lasting settlement of this problem. Pakistan's generosity and patience in bearing the brunt of the burden of providing shelter to the Afghan refugees also continue to deserve much praise; the international community's indebtedness to Pakistan is assuming ever-growing proportions. *

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* The President returned to the Chair.

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The recent unrest in Jammu and Kashmir is a source of anxiety for us. We are especially concerned about the threatening movement of forces from their peace-time positions. We hope that all the necessary efforts will be made to defuse the tensions in that sensitive part of the world, and we welcome the dialogue between Pakistan and India designed to achieve this end. We are of the opinion that the 1972 Simla agreement and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations may be the framework for a peaceful solution of this issue.

The accession to independence of Namibia in March this year has been a source of great pleasure for us. We have been deeply gratified to recognize this new member of the family of nations, one with which we have promptly established diplomatic relations. Coupled with the developments that began with the freeing of Mr. Nelson Mandela in neighbouring South Africa, and with the progress towards the dismantling of apartheid in that country, we hope that we may, after all, be witnessing the dawning of a better and more promising era in the southern part of the African continent.

Moving back to Asia, we welcome the positive developments in Cambodia. If the trend of the last few months is maintained, an end to the ordeal of this long-suffering nation may be in the offing. Turkey is prepared to support United-Nations-sponsored endeavours to assist Cambodia's return to the democratic process. Turning to the Korean peninsula, we support the initiatives undertaken by the Republic of Korea for a meaningful dialogue with its northern neighbour. We hope that the recent high-level contacts between the two States will facilitate the finding of a peaceful solution to the issues between them, thus leading to their eventual representation as full Members of our Organization.

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The abuse of and illicit trafficking in narcotics has now become a deadly scourge menacing the social fabric of all countries. In some of them, this evil has assumed the dimensions of a destabilizing force that even undermines political and economic structures. Often linked to arms smuggling and, thereby, to international terrorism, the issue has acquired increasingly disturbing proportions. At this point I should like to express again our firm solidarity with the Government and people of Colombia in their valiant struggle against the merchants of death. Other countries engaged in similar struggles also have our full sympathy.

International terrorism still casts a dark shadow over relations between nations and, as a major source of tension, continues to be a global problem. Experience gives adequate proof that even tolerating, not to mention supporting, terrorism is counterproductive, and those who condone such activities have always had reason to regret their short-sighted policies. Turkey condemns all forms of terrorism, regardless of their origins, causes and purposes, as criminal and unjustifiable. We remain attached to a policy of firmness vis-à-vis this evil.

After 27 years the Cyprus problem still awaits a negotiated settlement. On several occasions the Turkish Cypriot side has made constructive proposals and accepted negotiated ideas for a solution. The Secretary-General himself has also exerted considerable effort towards the same end. Nevertheless, a mutually agreed solution continues to elude us. The determining element in the Cyprus issue is the political equality of the two sides in the island: this is the single most important fact about Cyprus. Independence and the state of affairs created in 1960 were founded on the principle of equality and the partnership of the two peoples. While the 1960 order was soon destroyed by the Greek Cypriots through the use of force to establish their hegemony and annex the island to Greece, the principle of

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the equal status of the two communities has continued to guide all subsequent developments.

Indeed, the negotiating process and the Secretary-General's mission of good offices have over the years been based on the fact that there is a political dispute between the two peoples in Cyprus and that, as the parties to the dispute, these two peoples are political equals. The most recent confirmation of this principle is to be found in Security Council resolution 649 (1990), adopted unanimously on 12 March this year. In that resolution the Security Council calls for a freely reached and mutually acceptable solution to be arrived at through negotiations on an equal footing. Full respect for the status of equality of the two communities is a sine qua non for progress in Cyprus.

The Greek Cypriots must recognize that the object of intercommunal negotiations is to create a new partnership that would bring together the two peoples and their respective administrations within a new political association based on equality. The reason why the Cyprus question remains unresolved today is the Greek Cypriot refusal to accept the Turkish Cypriots as their equals. This is the attitude that underlies their application to the European Communities for full membership: they claim that they can act unilaterally in a matter that concerns the future political and economic status of the whole island. This claim has no legal, moral or factual basis, but it does show the true nature of Greek Cypriot perceptions.

The Greek Cypriot mentality views the Turkish Cypriots as adversaries who must be forced into obedience by whatever means possible. This is a far cry from the notion of equality. This mentality is also responsible for one of the most serious cases of human rights violations: the Turkish Cypriots, whose lives and well-being were in constant danger until 1974, were forced to survive in small enclaves for

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many years. Since 1974 they have been subjected to a ruthless and pervasive embargo by the Greek Cypriots, and are faced with an incessant Greek Cypriot campaign to isolate them from the rest of the world. Today the Turkish Cypriots have to overcome Greek Cypriot obstacles to their trading and travelling freely. They cannot send or receive letters directly. Their young people cannot compete in international sports. Foreign ships and aircraft are prevented from operating to and from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. What have the Turkish Cypriots done to deserve this? Nothing except to defend their equality and their rights. This unacceptable situation must be brought to an end, and the rights of the Turkish Cypriots must be respected. Only when relations between the two sides take a turn for the better can the efforts of the Secretary-General have a real chance of making progress in the direction indicated by Security Council resolution 649 (1990).

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Notwithstanding the sombre cloud created by the ongoing Gulf crisis, the positive and encouraging elements of the evolving international scene need to be reinforced by sound economic and social development. After a decade of missed opportunities the prospects for the world economy today appear brighter, provided that the inflationary trends spurred by the increase in oil prices and the recessionist pressures that are becoming more visible can be held in check. The opening of Eastern Europe to a market-based economic development, although difficult in the transitional phrase of restructuration, is a good sign for the future. None the less, the fears of the developing countries that Eastern Europe will divert already-limited financial flows away from them deserve to be addressed as a legitimate concern.

On the threshold of the last decade of the twentieth century we observe that economic and social problems related to population, poverty, unemployment, uneven income distribution, environmental degradation and the over-exploitation of natural resources not only have grown worse but have become more interlinked and globalized. These problems are especially acute in the developing world, and the debt burden in that world renders the task of surmounting poverty and its interrelated issues all the more difficult.

Despite all odds, the developing countries are bravely going through readjustment efforts to break out of stagnation and to make up, through resumed growth, for the losses created by the recession of the 1980s. These efforts need to be supported by an appropriate international economic environment. Emerging trade blocs have fuelled fears of protectionism, which need to be overcome through the adoption and implementation of realistic policies. We believe that healthy growth depends on freer trade rather than on aid. In this respect we hope that the Uruguay Round negotiations will have a successful outcome by the end of the year.

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On the other hand, despite the importance of trade unhindered by import barriers, financial flows are still necessary. The present trend of flows in the opposite direction has to be corrected. To that end the policies to be adopted by the developing countries themselves, as well as those pursued by international financial institutions, will play an equally significant role.

The least-developed countries have even more pressing issues confronting them, and we welcome the result of the second United Nations Conference for those countries, which ended just two weeks ago.

The various aspects of environmental degradation have now become more evident and call for different, but complementary and co-ordinated, responses. We believe that without an adequately preserved environment there can be no sustained long-term development. Therefore, the importance of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992, as well as its preparatory process, cannot be overestimated. This, we believe, will be a timely meeting, since new environmental questions continue to arise, while existing problems require more attention and concerted action.

In concluding my statement I wish to express the hope that this session of the General Assembly will be crowned with success and that our common endeavours will contribute to reinforcing peace and increasing prosperity throughout our planet. The Turkish delegation pledges to co-operate with you, Mr. President, and to do its part to secure that outcome.

Mr. POOS (Luxembourg)(interpretation from French): Never since the Assembly began to meet have we witnessed in the space of one intersessional period so many important events and exceptional political and economic upheavals. The revolution that has just occurred has worked a fundamental transformation in the geopolitical make-up of Europe and of the world. The cold war is over. We stand at the beginning of a new era.

(Mr. Poos, Luxembourg)

While subscribing to the statement made last Tuesday by my colleague Gianni de Michelis, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy, who spoke on behalf of the twelve countries members of the Community, I should like today to deal with a few subjects that I feel are most significant.

Never has an event so directly threatened peace as has the conflict that broke out only last month in the Gulf region. By its brutal invasion of Kuwait, a sovereign and independent country, at dawn on 2 August Iraq flagrantly violated the fundamental principles of our Charter and, in particular, the principle of the non-use of force in the settlement of differences between States.

The people of Luxembourg joined in condemning that unjustifiable and unacceptable act of aggression, one reminiscent of the darkest moments in their own history. On 6 August our Government banned any trade with Iraq and Kuwait. It decreed a freeze on both countries' financial assets. It has begun to provide emergency assistance to refugees in the countries most affected by the crisis and is participating fully in the efforts being made by the European Economic Community (EEC). Furthermore, it will contribute to the financing of military operations conducted in the region by certain of its allies within the framework of the United Nations mandate.

We welcome the unanimity and determination the international community has shown in expressing its disgust at this violation of international law. The speed with which the Security Council acted demonstrates that. The Council has developed a new ability to act. The unreserved implementation of Security Council resolutions should lead to a solution of the conflict through the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the release of all nationals of third countries. Meanwhile, all Member States of the Organization must scrupulously implement the comprehensive and binding embargo against Iraq.

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Above and beyond the resolution of this conflict, what is at stake is respect for the principles of our Organization and even, I would go so far as to say, its credibility. We must unite to deter anyone who might in the future be tempted to venture upon a similar adventure.

The conflict has created extreme tension and has exposed the Gulf region, already sorely tested by eight years of war, to a terrible catastrophe. We must focus attention on the suffering of the people of Kuwait and of hundreds of thousands of foreign workers who have fled Iraq and Kuwait, most often in tragic circumstances. Incalculable economic damage has been inflicted, on Kuwait in the first instance and on the other countries in the region as well. The entire world has been affected.

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The Iraqi leaders have to assume a very weighty historical responsibility. After all, did they not play a decisive part 10 years ago in unleashing another war? Did they not without hesitation use chemical gases to eliminate in cold blood thousands of Kurds in their own country? They are intransigent and their only concern is to get us to accept a fait accompli. The constant violations of embassies in Kuwait are unprecedented in history. The detention of thousands of foreign nationals as hostages exceeds all acceptable norms.

This violence, this cynicism remind us of the fascist practices that went on throughout the 1930s. Let us not forget that they were tolerated for too long and finally led the world into the Second World War. History will not pardon us if this mistake is made again. The United Nations must therefore emerge victorious from this test of strength.

The restoration and the maintenance of peace naturally raise other questions. The first is that of security in the Gulf region, which has been jeopardized by the presence of dictatorial régimes that profess exclusive ideologies and that are backed up by powerful armies. This proves once again that the accumulation of military arsenals does not enhance security; quite the contrary. We should give fresh impetus to our efforts at disarmament and international arms transfers.

Iraq's act of aggression cannot be justified by the impasse in which the question of Palestine finds itself, nor by the frustrations - that we understand - to which it has given rise in the Arab countries, particularly among the Palestinians. No linkage between the two questions can be allowed. The explosive character of the general situation in the Middle East forces us, nevertheless, to intensify our efforts to move towards the solution to the problem of Palestine.

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However, the collapse of the Berlin wall last November caught the imagination of the entire world. It was the death knell to the European and world order defined in Yalta and based on confrontation and ideological antagonism, accelerating the dynamic of change brought about by the policy of glasnost and perestroika. That event sent out shock waves to the borders of the most far-flung parts of Europe, and even beyond. One by one, the old non-representative régimes crumbled, giving way to the pressure from the man in the street and aspirations to liberty and democracy.

For the first time in 40 years there were free elections in most countries of Central and Eastern Europe that led to the establishment of new, fully representative governments. Political and economic reforms of unprecedented magnitude were brought about to put an end to this dominating ideology and an ineffective economic system.

I am delighted that Germany will be reunited in a few days. At long last the division of Europe has been ended. For the first time in their history all the peoples of Europe that share the same cultural heritage are able to organize their relations on a basis of common values, political pluralism, the periodic organization of free elections, the primacy of law, respect for human rights, and respect for the principles of the market economy.

An historic occasion has thus been given to the continent of Europe, an occasion which should lead to the establishment of an era of peace and prosperity. It is up to the summit of the Group of 35 in Paris to usher in this new chapter in European history.

However, to ignore relations with peoples on other continents would be for us Europeans a serious mistake. Mindful of their responsibilities in this decisive phase of its history, the European Community and its member States decided to speed

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up and deeepen the process of unification. The single internal market will be achieved in 1992. It will be beneficial not only to the member countries but also to third countries. Two rounds of intergovernmental negotiations will get under way at the end of this year and will be continued during the next quarter under the chairmanship of Luxembourg. The first round will seek to work out the final stages of economic and monetary union; the second will seek to strengthen the political structures of the Community and its member States.

We believe that it is by this increasingly tight integration in all fields that the Twelve will build a solid nucleus for a future stable, peaceful European order for the future. But this integration cannot stop at the member countries of the European Community alone. This intra-community process is inseparable from a structural reinforcement among all the European States. A new economic space has to be established between the member countries of the Community and the member countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). New economic and trade agreements have been negotiated or will soon be negotiated between the Community and the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

We do not underestimate the difficulties that the transition from a bureaucratic centralized economy to a market economy occasions for all these countries. These are in addition to the frustration and insecurity felt by peoples who, more often than not, have to confront a worsening of the employment situation and their standard of living. It is in order to overcome these difficulties that the Twelve have taken the initiative, within the Group of 24, to set up major aid programmes immediately. Furthermore, the negotiation of association agreements of an entirely new type will highlight the new potentials of these countries.

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At a time when ideological rivalries of the past are giving way to new relationships based on a shared conception of society, on trust and a spirit of partnership, the maintenance of powerful armies has become irrelevant in Europe. The events of the past few months have quite naturally accelerated the disarmament movement. A first agreement will soon be concluded in Vienna on the reduction of conventional forces in Europe as well as on a significant set of confidence- and security-building measures.

At this very moment, foreign troops are leaving the territories of countries in which they were stationed against the will of the people. Reductions in troops and military expenditures - at times drastic - have been decided upon, or are being envisaged. Additional considerable funds could thus be used to solve social, educational, health, environmental and development problems.

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), of which the States of Europe, the United States and Canada are participants, has played a fundamental role in the future of Europe. Its structure, its rules and its action should set an example for other regions of the world. The compelling aspiration of peoples to freedom and to control of their own destiny does not stop at the borders of Europe. In Asia, Latin America and Africa it is mobilizing more and more people every day and encourages them to demand the same rights and freedoms. Thus we welcome the return to democracy in Chile, the holding of free elections in Nicaragua, and soon, it is to be hoped, with the assistance of the United Nations, in Haiti. The Namibian people, which is finally free, has chosen a pluralistic democratic system. Mozambique and Angola are preparing to follow suit. Others are giving serious thought to it.

(Mr. Poos, Luxembourg)

Likewise, it is with satisfaction that we are following developments in South Africa. Considerable progress has been made, thanks to the new policies of President de Klerk, who has kept his promise by legalizing the opposition movements and by releasing Nelson Mandela and lifting the state of emergency. We also take note of the promise of the Government to release all other political prisoners and to declare an amnesty for those in exile. We hope that negotiations with a view to a new constitution creating a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa will get under way soon.

A month ago the five permanent members of the Security Council agreed to a comprehensive settlement of the Cambodian problem. That agreement offers a real and unique chance for the restoration of peace in that country, too long torn apart by war. We must avoid any return to the practices of the Khmer Rouge and Pol Pot, which were responsible for the extermination of several hundred thousand Cambodians. I am delighted that, following the Djakarta meeting, the Cambodian parties were able to accept that agreement, which is to be ratified at the next Paris Conference.

Neither democracy nor the market economy is a miraculous panacea. The painful experience of certain democracies undermined by violence, guerrilla war, socio-economic disorders and persistent under-development is proof of this. The establishment of political institutions guaranteeing pluralism and a democratic transition requires great effort and tenacity. Apart from the organization of periodic fair legislative elections, structures must be established allowing for the real participation of all in development and an equitable distribution of national resources.

There is close interaction between democracy and development. It is not possible to have one without the other; the one strengthens the other. At its

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special session in April the General Assembly reached an important consensus on the new contours of international economic co-operation. Using a more realistic, more balanced approach, it stressed, in particular, in a novel and encouraging way, the need for better use of human resources and respect for human rights. Mindful of the importance of increasing assistance for co-operation and development, my Government decided to double the volume of its aid by 1994.

The Government of Luxembourg continues to attach great importance to respect for human rights. It is still concerned by the flagrant violations of those rights throughout the world. It is up to our Organization to be increasingly vigilant in monitoring the strict universal implementation of existing instruments. Particular attention should be given to the rights of minorities, the rights of women and the rights of children.

A problem of another kind is threatening the survival of mankind. I refer to the destruction of the natural environment, which makes life on Earth possible. The question of the protection of the environment is central to the daily concerns of us all. Major international conferences have been devoted to this question. They have all contributed to the preparation of the world Conference on the Environment and Development, which is to be held in Brazil in 1992. This Conference will seek to face up to the enormous challenges posed by damage to the biosphere and to ecosystems, and by degradation of the environment, the effects of demographic pressure, the depletion of resources, and the extinction of species. Tropical deforestation is increasing. The area affected this year is 17 million hectares, as against only 11.3 million hectares in 1980. The capacity of forests to absorb carbon dioxide, which is a function vital to our planet, is diminishing rapidly.

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The world population, which is now more than 5 billion, will increase by about 960 million this decade, compared to 842 million during the 1980s. How will we be able to feed these new people? The food capacity of the planet is already stagnant or is actually decreasing. In Africa and Latin America, per capita food consumption is now lower than it was 10 years ago. Each day about 250,000 children are born, but about 40,000 die of hunger or malnutrition. All countries represented here, especially the richest, must constantly try to remedy this scandalous situation. It is for the World Summit for Children to propose the necessary measures. Fresh impetus must also be given to population policies to be conducted at the national and international levels. The rich countries must help those with high birth rates to implement these policies.

The depletion of the ozone layer and the accumulation in the atmosphere of gases that produce the greenhouse effect could gradually increase temperatures, with the obvious disastrous consequences. Given this alarming picture, now is the time to take action. The European Community must establish an agency for the environment, and that agency must be open to other European countries also. The Ministers of 93 countries who met in London at the end of last June decided to go beyond the objectives of the Montreal Protocol and to ensure that the chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) emissions that destroy the ozone layer are stopped before the end of the century. I welcome in particular the agreement to establish a fund to assist the developing countries to acquire the necessary technology to stop these emissions.

Energy efficiency and energy savings in general must be at the very heart of a new strategy, which is justified also by recent events in the Gulf. I hope that the next world conference on climate, to be held next November, will be able to agree on this objective and on guidelines for a framework convention on climatic

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change. This convention, with the necessary protocols, will be open for signature at the 1992 Conference. In this regard, the industrialized countries, which account for the consumption of 70 per cent of world primary energy and fossil fuels, must shoulder special responsibility. National accounting systems should be adapted to reflect, in the national product, the cost of conservation or replacement of natural resources, such as forests, water and fertile land. They should also reflect the devaluation of natural resources as non-renewable assets.

I welcome the new spirit that we see in international relations. There is no doubt that this Organization is a direct beneficiary. Its credibility and its ability to act have been reinforced to a considerable extent. Never has the United Nations been so sought after to resolve the world's problems.

In Namibia, the United Nations concluded, in exemplary fashion, a process leading the Namibian people to independence. The flawless organization of free elections was the key to that enormous success.

(Mr. Poos, Luxembourg)

In Central America the United Nations has contributed greatly to calming the situation by sending observers of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), by monitoring elections in Nicaragua and by demobilizing contra forces.

In the future it will have a special task in Cambodia, and after that perhaps in Afghanistan. In Western Sahara there is new hope that a referendum can be organized.

The United Nations provides a framework for the needed intensification of international co-operation to fight drug trafficking and poverty and to protect the environment.

The Organization's universality has been buttressed by the admission of Namibia and Liechtenstein, which I warmly welcome, and soon, I hope, South Korea.

Certainly, we would not be at this point were it not for the Secretary-General and his decisive action. I wish once again to pay a tribute to his qualities and his tireless mediation efforts in the service of peace.

I wish in conclusion warmly to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this session. I am sure you will guide our work to success.

Mr. FERNANDEZ ORDOÑEZ (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): Let me first of all, on behalf of my delegation, congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency. Our countries, Malta and Spain, are united by geography, history, culture and the staunch desire to build a safe, prosperous and peaceful Mediterranean for future generations. I wish you every success as you carry out your duties over the coming months, and I offer you the support of the Spanish delegation.

I take this opportunity to pay a sincere tribute and to convey my thanks, admiration and respect to the Secretary-General.

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(Mr. Fernandez Ordoñez, Spain)

I warmly welcome the Principality of Liechtenstein, which has just become a new Member of the Organization.

This session is beginning as we face the consequences of Iraq's invasion, occupation and annexation of Kuwait. But that event - which is unprecedented in the history of the United Nations and to which I shall refer again later - should not make us forget that 1990 marks the end of a chapter of the history not only of Europe but of the world. The entire post-war European scene has been peacefully and irrevocably transformed; the firm perseverance of the peoples of Europe and the calm position taken by the leaders of the Soviet Union have been decisive in this. It is as though the people of Central and Eastern Europe had awakened from a long night of silence and fear to find that they were no longer spectators, but the protagonists of their own history. After years of suffering, they are now finding direction and hope.

No tears were shed when on 8 November 1989 the Berlin Wall began to crumble. But the historic reunification of Germany has had to overcome many moments of mistrust. The culmination of that process in a few days will mark the tangible end of the cold war and will be a sign that Europe is regaining its own identity. We are pleased at the exemplary manner in which this has taken place. I wish to express the admiration and sympathy with which Spain has witnessed the process from the outset, and I congratulate the German people on its regained unity.

A wind of freedom is sweeping down the old roads of Europe, and we must now strive to guarantee peace and stability on that continent. In this the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) can play a vital role. It is the right forum for negotiating new measures of security and confidence, for strengthening economic co-operation and for monitoring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The summit of Heads of State of the CSCE to be held in Paris

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can make a decisive contribution to strengthening stability, disarmament and co-operation.

None the less, there is still reason for concern. The greatest threats to democracy in Central and Eastern Europe involve the outbreak of heightened nationalism, xenophobia and irredentism. This is combined with the widespread impatience and frustration that characterize times of great change. My country is very much aware of the dangers that stalk during the transition from authoritarianism to open democracy.

We are convinced that, to a greater or lesser degree, the changes in Europe will affect developments in other continents. In today's world, major change knows no boundaries. Before the recent changes in Europe, nearly all Latin American countries had broadened their freedoms and consolidated their democratic systems despite enormous difficulties of all kinds. Today we can all feel a little like Berliners - with joy and not concern as in 1963 - when we look forward to the crumbling of other walls. I am thinking of the Soweto wall of intolerance and fragmentation and the walls in other relics of totalitarianism, which are beginning to collapse despite the past blindness of such régimes.

Today the international community's attention is focused on the conflict in the Persian Gulf unleashed by the decision of the President of Iraq to invade, occupy and annex Kuwait, an independent State Member of the United Nations. Thanks in part to the new climate of détente engendered and strengthened by the changes in Europe, it has been possible to provide a united and resolute response to the first international crisis since the end of the cold war.

The speed and effectiveness with which the Security Council has acted in this grave crisis are embodied in a series of resolutions that lay the foundation for a peaceful settlement of the problem. Only yesterday the Council adopted a new resolution, another in the series of measures taken to complement those enacted

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earlier. It is important for us all to continue our best efforts to achieve a peaceful solution to this dangerous conflict. The Arab countries have an important role to play in facilitating a peaceful solution within the clear framework established by the Security Council resolutions.

My country has adopted a group of internal measures to comply with the embargo, and has joined the international community's peace efforts by sending three Spanish naval vessels to the region to give effect to an embargo which, in our view, is the best means to make the Government of Iraq see reason.

I shall not dwell on obvious, much-repeated ideas, but I wish briefly to highlight the points Spain views as basic. First of all, no negotiated solution can be acceptable outside the framework established by the Security Council. Secondly, it is our duty to put a stop to aggression while avoiding war. To that end we must manifest our conviction that law and reason are on our side. We must maintain a firm position, preserve and strengthen our unity and act with patience. While the continuation of the crisis will surely have its costs, the costs of war would be far greater.

The gravity of the crisis must not blind us to the fact that thanks to the new international climate and the work of the United Nations and its Secretary-General we have achieved positive results in various conflicts, to some of which I shall now refer.

Namibia recently gained full independence thanks to a process admirably guided by the United Nations. We welcome Namibia as a Member of the Organization and reaffirm our resolute intention to increase our bilateral ties of friendship and co-operation.

In South Africa, we finally saw the liberation of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners along with the adoption of measures towards in-depth constitutional and legislative changes that will bring about full freedom for all.

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Once there are guarantees of those changes and of the total abolition of the apartheid system, South Africa will be able fully to rejoin the international community. There must be efforts to overcome the serious outbreaks of violence that have recently occurred.

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(Mr. Fernandez Ordoñez, Spain)

In Central America, thanks in large measure to the perseverance of the region's leaders, a sound peace process is under way. National reconciliation in Nicaragua and the demobilization of the resistance are now reality. The basis has been established for negotiations which, we hope, will lead to peace and reconciliation in El Salvador and Guatemala. From the outset my country has participated in the front lines of the work of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA), and we are ready to continue providing the Secretary-General with all necessary co-operation and assistance.

In Cambodia, following determined efforts over the past two years, the permanent members of the Security Council have set in motion an ambitious plan which, after acceptance by the parties to the conflict, could be the basis for national reconciliation.

My Government welcomed with great satisfaction the recent meeting between the Prime Ministers of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and we are following with great interest the various contacts to which that meeting gave rise, including those intended to resolve the question of Korean representation in this forum, which Spain wishes to be truly universal.

We reiterate our desire to continue negotiations to resolve all differences with the United Kingdom on the question of Gibraltar. The only solution is re-establishment of Spain's territorial integrity with respect for the legitimate interests of the population of Gibraltar, in conformity with resolutions of the General Assembly.

With respect to Western Sahara, we expect the continuation and success of the Secretary-General's happy initiatives to organize, without administrative or military constraints, a referendum in that Territory to ensure the

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self-determination of the Sahraoui people, with the necessary international guarantees. We believe it would be beneficial to all to retain the consensus achieved last year in the General Assembly.

The absolute need to settle the Gulf crisis must not allow us to forget the need also for a comprehensive approach to the situation in the Middle East. We continue to believe it urgent for Israel to begin dialogue with the Palestinian people that could lead to a comprehensive and just settlement on the basis of "land for peace"; such a settlement can be based only on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). My Government still views the policy of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories as illegal from the point of view of international law; that policy is an obstacle to peace in the region. We are convinced of the need for a just and lasting solution that will both protect the self-determination of the Palestinian people and recognize secure borders for all the countries of the region. We believe the most appropriate avenue is an international conference under United Nations auspices, with the participation of all the parties concerned.

But the problem is broader in scope. After various contacts with other countries in the region, particularly Italy, my country has just launched, in Palma de Mallorca, an initiative to convene a Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean modelled on the CSCE - the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. That would be a comprehensive progressive approach to establish rules and principles for stability in the region. We must not allow ourselves to think that when the Gulf conflict is settled everything will return to normal, because nothing will ever be the same again. Massive collective efforts will be required. Spain is a Mediterranean country and will continue its active co-operation with other countries of the region to defend our common peace,

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progress and security. In that way we hope to contribute to the stability of this zone of conflict, a zone where there are nevertheless many opportunities for co-operation, as seen in our common history and shared culture.

I have been talking about the efforts of the United Nations on regional conflicts. But if we do not want a world where the will of the strongest prevails, we must not undervalue the role the United Nations can and must play in the solution of conflicts through legal means. To that end we must be aware of the need to strengthen the principal legal organ of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice. The Spanish Government thus intends to submit before the end of the year the optional declaration referred to in article 36 of the Statute of the Hague Court, accepting its compulsory jurisdiction.

In these times, when East-West tension is ending and new forms of co-operation are appearing, we must speak of the global problems and challenges facing the international community: disarmament, the growing gap between rich and poor countries, drugs, the deterioration of the environment and the need to protect human rights.

On conventional disarmament, we must aim for November signature of a treaty dramatically reducing armaments in Europe. It is necessary to promote confidence-building measures among States. We need objective and standardized exchange of information on military expenditures, capabilities, activities and structures to promote that confidence. The United Nations system has an important role to play in that respect.

On nuclear disarmament, Spain wishes for an early conclusion of an agreement under the strategic arms reduction talks (START) between the United States and the Soviet Union. Once a treaty on conventional disarmament in Europe has been signed, negotiations can begin to reduce short-range nuclear weapons. On the other hand,

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it is imperative that we consider effective ways and means to halt nuclear proliferation; in so doing, it is necessary also to retain the safeguards system of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the application of which can certainly be improved.

The non-proliferation framework cannot be complete without the necessary movement towards a universal system of missile control. We attach great importance to the 1987 initiative, to which Spain has subscribed and which is being considered by other States as well.

The Spanish Government is concerned at the delay in formulating an international convention prohibiting the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and governing the destruction of existing stocks. The recent Gulf crisis makes it even more urgent to give new impetus to this work.

It is also very important to give fresh impetus to development. One of the most important challenges we face is probably to overcome grave international economic imbalances. We are all becoming increasingly aware that political peace cannot be attained or made complete without advances along the road of economic development to reduce the vast differences between rich countries and poor.

The United Nations system has the means to lay the foundation for a new and different kind of international economic relations. We must approach this problem in a new way, as became clear last spring at the special session on international economic co-operation. First of all, we must avoid the old ideological perspective by which the developed North is solely responsible for the structural ills of the developing South. We do not think we need to speak of responsibility, but rather of joint responsibility, taking into full account the concept of interdependence, with all its consequences, and ridding ourselves of notions of one-sided guilt.

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A second element for consideration is the need to define a common understanding of the idea of international co-operation, and also the efforts that developing countries themselves must make to adopt and implement appropriate economic policies at the national level. Finally, it is essential in the process of development to attribute due importance to the human factor. In that connection, there are issues that seem to have renewed importance, such as the elimination of poverty, the struggle against illiteracy, access to health care and education.

But if we refer to international economic relations, it is imperative that we approach a whole set of particularly important issues. The first is the overwhelming problem of external indebtedness that threatens to strangle the economies of many countries and to bring them to the brink of despair. Secondly, but equally critical, is the question of the international trade régime to be designed at the Uruguay Round. It is urgent to devise new formulas that reduce and if possible eliminate the instability of commodity prices, which are the prime source of export earning for most of the developing countries. Finally, we should support the process of integration of the Soviet and Eastern European economies into the international financial and trading régimes, without weakening the commitment and support of the industrialized countries towards developing nations.

Spain is increasing its efforts towards co-operation with developing countries and especially with those in Latin America. Spain has already signed agreements with some of them that envision the transfer of sizeable financial resources. In the last five years, my country has tripled the volume of resources allocated bilaterally to development assistance. We also intend to participate, within the framework of the European Community, in the signing of agreements on commodities that will allow, as far as possible, the stabilization of developing countries' export earnings.

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Finally, aware that external indebtedness has become an intolerable burden for many developing countries, Spain has decided to support the international strategy represented by the Brady Plan. We have signed bilateral refinancing agreements with several Latin America countries and is also aware of the need to pay due attention to the financial capabilities of the debtors to repay their loans and attach a lesser priority to the amount owed by them, for otherwise that would lead to a schedule of payments that they would never be able to meet.

The protection of the environment is another of the global challenges that our community of nations must face without delay. In that task, the United Nations can play an essential role, and is in fact doing so now. We place our hopes in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development that is to take place in Brazil in 1992 to devise a strategy to halt the deterioration of the environment while increasing efforts to encourage sustained economic growth in all countries. For Spain, as a Mediterranean country, the specific problems of our region - forest fires, land erosion and, most particularly, desertification - have special significance. The environment differs from region to region.

The war against narcotic drugs will not be won without effective and alert international co-ordination. In that respect, the special session on narcotic drugs was a pivotal milestone in the long history of United Nations efforts in that field. The 1988 Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has been ratified by Spain. When implemented by all countries, it will be a decisive element in the struggle, which must attack production, traffic and consumption. We must persevere in actions aimed at fiscal control of the drug dealers' bank accounts. The laundering of money obtained from trafficking is, as we all know, closely related to arms dealing. It is also desirable that the operations performed under the umbrella of tax havens be unveiled and expunged. We must put an end to the scourge.

(Mr. Fernandez Ordoñez, Spain)

The promotion and protection of human rights. Last year, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted. Spain signed it early in the year and will ratify it as soon as the appropriate parliamentary procedures have been concluded. What better opportunity is there to celebrate the adoption of that Convention than the World Summit for Children that is to take place in a few days in New York? Also approved last year was the Second Optional Protocol for the abolition of the death penalty, which Spain has also signed and hopes to ratify in the near future. Long is the legislative path travelled by the Organization in the field of human rights. Even longer is the path yet to be travelled in terms of effective control of the honouring and observance of existing rules.

I should like to stress one issue. There must be no doubt whatsoever that no Government can hide behind the shield of national sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs, or any kind of paranoid recourse to the existence of an alleged international plot as an excuse to escape impartial investigation by the Organization when its Members deem it necessary. On the other hand, it becomes necessary to clear up the misunderstanding to the effect that we, the Western countries, ignoring ethnic, cultural or religious differences, are attempting to impose our scale of values on other geographical regions. It must be quite clear that what the Western countries intend - and along with us many others from other regions - is that all States should steadfastly respect the provisions of the Charter in that field and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which establish the ground rules from which nobody can detract, and that others that have signed specific agreements on human rights - agreements that enforce universal, I repeat, universal standards regarding human dignity and the promotion and protection of fundamental rights - should truly honour and openly account for their actions before the established monitoring mechanisms. Those are the requirements

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that we must all honour equally, including those derived from commitments into which we have freely entered.

I should like to conclude by stating that in this successful year of changes and promising horizons, yet also of serious crises and unexpected global problems, the United Nations has pursued its process of revitalization, enhancing its prestige along with great pragmatism and reliability in its actions. Today, from the fertile ground of peace-keeping operations to decisive action in fields as transcendent as the Security Council's response to acts of aggression, actions regarding the environment or drug trafficking, and ranging from the new pragmatism and willingness to negotiate that prevail in such fields as disarmament or co-operation for development, the Organization is still the sole universal forum available to sow the seeds and reap the harvest of solidarity for future generations.

Now that we can talk about a new era of international relations, now that so much has changed in such a short time, we can say with greater reason than ever that the United Nations must become the highest moral and political authority to lead a world in peace. Spain, which sustained that doctrine when the Organization was at its lowest ebb, stresses it now even more resolutely. We need rules, criteria, and standards of behaviour that reach beyond rhetoric. From now on we must efficiently tackle the old and the new problems of the world at the end of the millenium. The time available to us for preventing those problems from becoming catastrophes is not unlimited. In fact, it is short. Yet the solution is not beyond us. It is within us.

Mr. COLLINS (Ireland): I should like at the outset to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the presidency of the Assembly, and to your country, Malta. I know your wisdom and expertise will guide

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

us in a most efficient manner through our work. Our thanks go to the outgoing President, Mr. Garba of Nigeria, who presided so ably over the forty-fourth session. I also wish to record our thanks to the Secretary-General for his continuing efforts for an enhanced role for the United Nations.

The Foreign Minister of Italy, Mr. De Michelis, has already addressed the Assembly on behalf of the twelve member States of the European Community. My Government fully endorses the views contained in that statement, which are supported by all member States of the Community.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

The year that has elapsed since we last met here in the General Assembly has been a truly memorable one in international life. In the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and in the Soviet Union, a great impulse to freedom and democracy welling up from below transformed political and economic systems frozen in place since the end of the Second World War. As those great changes gathered pace, the rift driven through the European continent two generations ago began at last to heal and the confrontation between hostile alliances - the most dangerous in all of human history - began to lose its purpose and to wind down.

For a year now, each remarkable change has been a prelude to even greater change and to new and wider opportunities. East-West confrontation eased and turned increasingly to co-operation. Disarmament became a serious possibility and regional conflicts began to be addressed. Most dramatically of all, Germany, divided in 1945, has moved toward unity in response to the democratic wish of the German people and with the full goodwill of the international community.

It has been a time of hope, notwithstanding the many serious problems that remain in international life. With the end of East-West confrontation, we had begun at last to emerge into a truly post-war world where the institutions of international order established after the Second World War could function as intended.

Now, suddenly and unexpectedly, that hope is challenged and those institutions face a most serious test. A State Member of the Organization, a leading member of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Arab League, has attacked another by force, overwhelmed it and purported to annex it in flagrant breach of international law and of the most basic provisions of the Charter.

We are therefore now faced with a most serious question. Can our system of collective security, of common action against any Member State that commits aggression, function as it was intended to? And if it does not, or if the will of

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

the international community to uphold a system of order and justice and law between nations falters, who then will defend the weak against the strong?

In the face of Iraq's aggression, the Security Council has taken action that is both decisive and unprecedented in the history of the Organization. An extraordinarily high degree of consensus has been achieved among members of the Security Council and of the United Nations as a whole. We all subscribe to the principle of the inadmissability of using force to settle disputes between States. It has been possible to reach a convergence of views on the steps to be taken to counter the use of force in this instance.

Ireland believes that it is of the greatest importance that a political solution be found through the full implementation of all the resolutions of the Security Council. Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait and the legitimate Government of that country must be restored. Until then, the economic and political pressure brought about by the Security Council measures must be maintained. The international community must make clear that behaviour such as Iraq's invasion of Kuwait is absolutely unacceptable. Without respect for international law, none of us is safe. Through the United Nations we must effectively reassert the rule of law.

With our partners in the European Community, Ireland fully supports the Security Council resolutions already adopted in relation to the crisis in the Gulf. The safety and welfare of our citizens who have found themselves caught up in the situation in the Gulf as a result of having been in Kuwait or Iraq at the time of the invasion have been and will remain a priority for my Government. In concert with our partners, we are doing everything possible to deal with the difficulties caused to Irish citizens by Iraq's actions. We shall not cease in our efforts to secure their rights to exit from those two countries if they wish. We insist that the rights of Irish and other citizens be respected.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

The Gulf crisis has demonstrated the importance of the United Nations. This is the forum where the collective will of the international community can be expressed in the interest of the maintenance of international peace and security. This is where we can establish the parameters for a more secure and stable world order, now that the cold war can be assigned to history. A good beginning has been made in very difficult circumstances. The capacity of the United Nations to act in such situations is the central element necessary to provide the assurances we all need.

The United Nations role in the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts in the past year must be recognized as a significant step forward. The United Nations has a legitimate task in the establishment of international standards for free and honest elections. The electoral success scored in Namibia justifies the unstinting efforts of the Organization over the past 25 years to bring freedom and democracy to that country. Nicaragua is yet another example of how well the Organization can perform in that sphere.

The long hoped-for emergence of agreement between the parties in Cambodia and the positive moves to peaceful resolution of the conflicts in El Salvador and the Western Sahara should present the Organization with an early opportunity to consolidate its expertise in election monitoring and to further the democratic tradition in areas where it has been lacking in the past.

The peace-keeping role of the United Nations continues to attract a high level of interest and is likely to do so for the foreseeable future. If peace-keeping is to be retained as an integral part of the peace-making activity of the Organization, it must - I repeat, must - be accorded adequate political and financial support.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

The mandate given to our peace-keeping forces is never an easy one. Our forces operate under difficult, indeed often hostile conditions. Their motivation to serve the higher interest of peace and stability is and should be beyond question. Every effort must be made at the political level to ensure that that commitment is not in vain.

If I dwell on this, it is because my country has, when asked, given liberally, and because we believe in the importance of this role. In particular, Ireland has participated in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) since its establishment in 1978. That has not been without human cost. Thirty-one Irish soldiers have died while on service with UNIFIL, 11 of them by hostile fire. Our involvement, however, will continue as a concrete expression of Ireland's support for bringing peace to Lebanon.

If the United Nations is to carry out the expanded functions in prospect in the peace-keeping area, it must be given adequate resources to do so. Proper funding, clear guidance and the political will of the membership are all necessary in full measure to ensure a sustained effort. We have a challenge before us to emulate the efforts of past years in order to make the United Nations system relevant in the promotion of peace and democracy internationally.

The promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms is inscribed in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as in the two international Treaties on human rights, which guide so much of our work in this field. In December 1989, Ireland ratified both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. At the same time, Ireland acceded to the First Optional Protocol to the former Covenant, which permits complaints by individuals. I therefore reaffirm Ireland's wholehearted commitment to the principles enshrined in those Covenants and the practices they imply.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

Throughout the world, there are still some countries where the human rights situation is less than satisfactory, where political and social systems continue to exist in which human rights and fundamental freedoms are violated. Irish public opinion continues to follow with concern the threats to human rights that still exist.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

We welcome the continued improvement in East-West relations and the genuinely revolutionary developments in Central and Eastern Europe. The political and social order established as an outcome of the Second World War has been overturned by the clearly expressed will of the people, expressed initially through peaceful mass demonstrations and restated through the democratic elections that have taken place. In most of those countries moribund political and economic systems have been replaced by vibrant new democracies that are now being consolidated, while reforms are under way to bring about market-oriented economic systems.

An important symbol of such changes is the rapid process of German unification. This unity is a positive factor in the development of Europe as a whole and of the European Community in particular. It is taking place freely and democratically, in full respect of the relevant agreements and treaties and of all the principles defined by the Helsinki Final Act, in a context of dialogue and East-West co-operation. We wholeheartedly welcome those developments and are pledged to support them in appropriate ways, both by bilateral action and through our membership of the European Community.

The overall positive trend is encouraging and suggests that it is possible to establish new relationships to replace the mistrust that has dominated Europe for almost 45 years and the confrontation between two mutually antagonistic and mistrustful alliances. The artificial division of Europe must give way to unity based on mutual trust and the recognition of the common European identity and interdependence. In our view the most appropriate way to do this is to enhance and develop the process established by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) as the framework for lasting peace and co-operation in Europe. It is clear that the decisions to be taken at the next summit meeting in Paris in November will be of fundamental importance in this respect. We hope indeed to make significant progress here in New York next week in the preparations for that summit.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

Recent events in the Middle East have against demonstrated that despite positive developments in East-West relations, international stability is threatened by an adversarial approach to security, which often finds expression in increased armaments as well as in efforts to obtain possession of dangerous weapons of mass destruction. We continue to believe that real security can be found only through a co-operative approach, which seeks to build confidence between nations and to remove the fear of attack by eliminating the means of waging war and, in the first place, nuclear weapons.

Ireland continues to be a strong and unqualified supporter of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We believe that the degree of consensus reached on a wide number of issues at the recent Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty will strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation régime as a whole. While we regret that the Conference was unable to adopt a concluding document, we believe that the discussions have reinforced a commitment to the Treaty, and we look forward to redoubling efforts to ensure a successful outcome of the 1995 Review Conference and to agreement on extension of this vital Treaty.

As a step towards the goal of the elimination of all nuclear weapons, agreement on a halt to testing of nuclear weapons and rapid conclusion of a comprehensive test ban would be the single clearest proof the nuclear-weapon States could offer of their commitment to complete nuclear disarmament and of their determination to control the qualitative development of the nuclear-arms race. We do hope for rapid progress towards this end.

We look forward to the early achievement of an international agreement banning the production, possession and use of chemical weapons. We trust that the recent agreement between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to reduce significantly their chemical-weapons stocks and to cease

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production of those weapons will facilitate progress in the negotiations of a universal ban.

The conflict in Cambodia has exacted a terrible toll in human suffering from the Cambodian people. The past 20 years have been witness to death and destruction on an enormous scale. We are greatly encouraged by the determined efforts of the international community over the past year to bring about a just and lasting solution to this tragedy, a solution that will incorporate the fundamental right of the Cambodian people to determine their own future free from outside interference.

We welcome the role envisaged for the United Nations in bringing peace and justice to that troubled country. We must remain firm and resolute in our commitment to ensure for the people of Cambodia a future in which they may enjoy true peace, security and prosperity.

We welcome the progress that has been made in the past year in South Africa and in particular the dialogue that has opened up between President De Klerk and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC).

At long last there are grounds for believing that the dark cloud hanging over South Africa may be lifting. The removal of the ban on political organizations, the release of Nelson Mandela, the partial lifting of the state of emergency and the repeal of the Separate Amenities Act are all important steps towards the abolition of apartheid. However, major obstacles remain to be overcome before it can be said that the apartheid system has been dismantled. The central pillars of apartheid - the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act and the Land Acts - continue in force. The great majority of the population of South Africa still does not benefit from the fundamental human right of franchise. It is essential that negotiations leading to a non-racial, united and democratic South Africa take place without delay.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

It is our fervent hope that all those who are working for a peaceful settlement of South Africa's problems can succeed in surmounting the most recent wave of violence that endangers the progress that has been made in recent months.

We are all heartened by the recent positive developments on the Korean peninsula. In particular, we welcome the holding of the historic meeting of the Prime Ministers of North and South Korea and hope that through intensified dialogue an improved climate of mutual trust and understanding will be generated. It remains our earnest hope that the Korean people will be fully represented in the United Nations in the near future. Simultaneous membership of the United Nations by the two Koreas can contribute to the process of defusing tensions in the peninsula. It would also be an advantage to our Organization, bringing it significantly closer to the universal membership that is its vocation.

While we have rightly concentrated in recent months on the need for an early and, if possible, peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis, we must not forget the other great source of tension in the Middle East: the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Ireland shares the view of its partners in the European Community that it is a further injustice to the Arab people that Iraq's aggression against Kuwait has delayed the search for progress towards a solution to the problems of the region, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict and the situation in Lebanon.

We must resume the peace process with a view to a comprehensive settlement to be reached within the framework of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of the representatives of the Palestinian people.

The Middle East region has witnessed in recent years a plague of hostage taking. Everyone in Ireland was particularly overjoyed at the recent release of our compatriot Brian Keenan after almost four and one-half years in captivity.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

The last year also saw the release of a number of other hostages in Lebanon. I am truly delighted that these innocent people have been reunited with their families and with their friends. I earnestly hope that all hostages, no matter where they are being held or by whom, will be released. I appeal to all those who hold these hostages and to those who may be in a position to influence them to ensure their immediate, unconditional and safe release.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

The second special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation, which I had the privilege to address on behalf of the European Community, provided a timely opportunity to reflect on recent experience and to establish broad guidelines for successful development in the 1990s. The consensus Declaration adopted at the special session recognizes the responsibilies of each developing country for its own development and for the institution of economic policies conducive to that end. At the same time it recognizes the responsibility of developed countries to promote sustained international economic growth and to provide substantial concessional resources for development.

The second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held at Paris from 3 to 13 September 1990, agreed on a Programme of Action for the 1990s to tackle the range of very difficult development problems facing the least developed. Their special needs and those of other developing countries must be kept continuously in the forefront of our minds.

The protection of the environment continues to be one of the issues of greatest concern to all our peoples, particularly in respect of the very serious environmental problems that confront the countries of Eastern and Central Europe. I am hopeful that in co-operation with those countries it will be possible to reach agreement on a series of concrete measures that will help to remedy the long years of neglect of the environment in that part of the world.

The adoption of a major declaration on the environment by the European Council at its meeting in Dublin on 26 June is a clear indication of the importance the European Community attaches to environmental issues. The Declaration contains a statement of fundamental rights to a clear and healthy environment which the Community believes should be guaranteed to all its citizens. It stresses the

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importance of international co-operation in achieving this and repeats the view we all hold of our shared responsibility for protecting the environment of the planet.

We have drawn attention in the past to the dangers posed by nuclear submarine traffic in the Irish Sea and similar areas with extensive shipping and fishing activities. We cannot close our eyes to the possibility - and even the likelihood - that sooner or later an accident will occur, with what could be calamitous consequences for my country. Apart from the weapons they carry, the nuclear-power units of submarines are themselves a cause of concern. As has been suggested by a number of Nordic countries, we would urge the need to examine the feasibility of establishing agreed safety guidelines for sea-borne nuclear reactors.

In recent months there have been indications that there may now be a willingness on all sides to address the problem of Northern Ireland in a way that holds promise of a durable solution. The extent of the commitment in that regard is a matter that will be tested in the weeks and the months ahead. For our part, my Government reaffirms its commitment to do everything possible to create the conditions and framework in which productive talks can get under way at the earliest possible date.

We do not minimize the difficulties in our way. The potential participants in talks differ - sometimes profoundly - in their sense of the past and in their aspirations for the future. But we are encouraged by the extent to which a shared analysis of the problem is beginning to emerge. For perhaps the first time in 60 years a common vocabulary is being developed. On all sides the issue is now defined in terms of the three relationships - within Northern Ireland, between both parts of the island of Ireland, and between Britain and Ireland. The immediate task is to establish whether it is possible to find structures for talks which will properly reflect the interdependence of those three crucial relationships.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

For five years now the Anglo-Irish Agreement has been the bedrock on which Anglo-Irish relations have been conducted. The Agreement is not merely a statement of principle but also a programme for action. It is this dynamic element that gives the Agreement its strength and vitality. The past five years have seen an important series of advances brought about by the Agreement, including new and strengthened fair-employment legislation, more impartial policing of the marching season, an economic regeneration programme for West Belfast and the establishment of the International Fund for Ireland, with generous support from the United States, the European Community, Canada and New Zealand.

Equally, however, an honest assessment would have to point up the distance still to be travelled. Fundamental questions remain about the role and behaviour of the locally recruited regiment of the British Army, the Ulster Defence Regiment, questions thrown into even sharper relief by allegations of collusion and related issues dealt with in the Stevens report. Harassment of members of the nationalist community by sectors of the security forces continues to be a source of the most serious concern. In the economic sector it remains to be seen whether the regeneration programme for West Belfast will fully respond to the dimensions of the problem or whether the new fair-employment legislation will have an effect in practice in reducing current imbalances in the work-force.

The fundamental issues which the Anglo-Irish Agreement seeks to address - identity, equality and confidence - are at the heart of the problems of Northern Ireland. In any new arrangement better and more comprehensive ways may be found to address those questions, but the issues themselves cannot be dismissed or downgraded in importance. Those who urge that a new arrangement be put in place must understand the need for reassurance to the nationalist community that the

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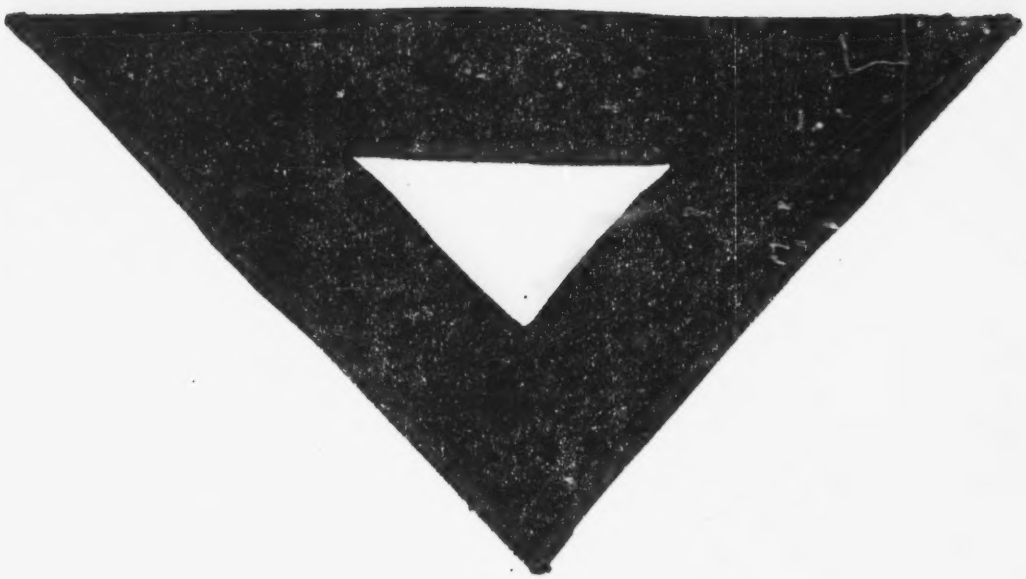
intention is to go forward and not backwards. Memories of 60 years of Stormont rule and discrimination are not easily erased, especially since, for many nationalists, they are kept very actively alive by the continuing experience of Unionist control at local-authority level.

The need for reassurance is not of course confined to one community. We fully recognize the concerns of Unionists - their fears and the sense of threat that many of their community live with. We are conscious that our understanding of the Unionist position would be greatly enhanced by hearing Unionist views at first hand. That is why we have so often and so genuinely expressed our readiness to enter into dialogue with leaders of that community. With so much of substance requiring discussion between us, it is surely in no one's interest that artificial barriers be placed in the way of such dialogue.

I would wish, finally, that this body should be conscious of a particularly positive development in Anglo-Irish relations since our last General Assembly. Three cases dating from the mid-1970s in which Irish people were widely believed to have been wrongly convicted in British courts - the Guildford Four, the Maguire family and the Birmingham Six - have been of great concern to my Government and have cast a deep shadow over Anglo-Irish relations.

Within the last year the innocence of the Guildford Four has finally been established, and the other two cases appear well on the way to resolution. The recent referral of the Birmingham Six case to the Court of Appeal is a particularly important and welcome development. Those six men have already spent 16 years behind bars. I know that concerned people everywhere will share my Government's very great sense of urgency about a satisfactory resolution of this case at the earliest possible date.

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

The international community and this Organization face an important challenge in the period ahead. At the same time it is an opportunity, an opportunity to establish a more acceptable world order. A good beginning has been made. Let us dedicate ourselves within the United Nations to sustaining the effort needed to this end. The prize to be gained is great. It is also of the utmost significance for the future of all of us.

The meeting rose at 8.15 p.m.